

A

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR,

OF THE LATE

SIR PETER PARKER, BARONET,

CAPTAIN OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP MENELAUS, OF 32 GUNS,

*KILLED IN ACTION WHILE STORMING THE AMERICAN
CAMP AT BELLAIR NEAR BALTIMORE,*

ON THE THIRTY-FIRST OF AUGUST,
1814.

BY SIR GEORGE DALLAS, BART.

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*Stat singulis dies, inter, et terribile tempus  
Omnibus est vita; sed famam extendere factis  
Hoc virtutis opus.*~~~~~

SECOND EDITION.

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TO LADY PARKER.

MY DEAR MARIANNE,

IN presenting you with this Memoir, I dedicate to your sorrow, every way, a sad work.—It is a monument erected by my heart, not less, to record my own griefs, than to perpetuate the fame and gallant services of your ever dear, and justly lamented, heroic husband. Mowed down, as he has been, in the bloom of his glory, to the regret alike of his country and friends, it belonged peculiarly to me, (however incompetent to the task) who rivalled you in affliction at his fall—whose tears have been mingled with your own,—who knew him so well,—and who loved you both so tenderly,—to become his biographer on this melancholy occasion, and to embalm with my pen, as well the virtues of his character, as his professional merits, and public services.

I fear these pages will but aggravate your sorrows, by more forcibly presenting to your view the extent of your loss. And yet, may not grief like yours be soothed by musing over those splendid

DEDICATION.

qualities of mind which increase our regrets at their extinction, which quicken the hope of their final and appropriate reward, and by that general sympathy which enshrines the relic of the hero who falls for his country, and which you have every where experienced in so eminent a degree? It is one thing to mourn the loss of a beloved husband, whose virtues beamed only in the narrow circle of domestic life, and who bows to the decree of nature; it is another to bend over the urn of the hero who resigns his life to glory, and who to domestic virtues, superadds those more brilliant public qualities and services which redeem him from oblivion in death, ennoble his descendants, and bid him still live in the memory of his country. There is a splendour in grief of this sort which becomes its balm when its first anguish has subsided. The former is a private, the latter is a public calamity. Relations and friends alone lament the first, the state at large bewails the last. All have an interest in the relatives of the brave, and the griefs of the surviving are better borne when they are felt to be generally shared. Sympathy is the link of society; and strong is the support, where every heart constitutes the chain: this lot is yours; your country is the partner in your affliction, and has become the guardian of yourself and children. Illustrious lot! Take comfort, therefore, my dear Marianne; and since it has pleased Divine Providence thus early to chasten you with affliction, may this awful and instructive lesson, which, by the divine consolations of religion, have already purified

DEDICATION.

and refined your heart, serve only to animate it additionally with the love of God, and by confirming you in a devout reliance on his mercies and the truths of his gospel, every way better prepare you for that blessed state hereafter, where, re-united with the object of your grief, joy shall be eternal, and sorrow be no more.

I ever am, my dear Marianne,

With devoted affection,

Your sympathizing and afflicted Father,

GEORGE DALLAS.

*Saint Margaret's,
Titchfield, Hampshire
Sept. 1815.*

A

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF THE LATE

CAPTAIN SIR PETER PARKER, BART. R.N.

&c.

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Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise  
(That last infirmity of noble mind)  
To scorn delights, and live laborious days.  
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,  
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,  
Comes the dread fury with th' abhorred shears  
And slits the thin-spun Life.

MILT. Lyc. L. 10.

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WHEN individuals, animated by a laudable desire of fame, turn from the attractive influence of domestic ease, to devote their lives to danger, in the pursuit of glory, and seal with their pure blood the triumphs of their country, it is the province of the biographer to weave for them the wreath of unfading renown, by consigning their actions to the reverence of time.

The lives of such men nurture, by their example, the heroic passions of the soul. They kindle, by their moral effect on the rising race, those generous and elevated feelings, which, ennobling the profession of arms above every other, constitute alike the shield and ornament of the military

breast, and excite therein that spirit of patriotism, that thirst of distinction, and that equal contempt of wealth and danger, which, exalting the human mind above its common level, lift it, in life, to happiness, and, in death, to glory.

The interests of civil society, therefore, are not less promoted, than its best affections gratified, when history, bestowing the palm of immortality, consecrates the glories of the brave, by holding up to the admiration of futurity, those illustrious naval and military heroes, who have eminently contributed by their lives, to reflect lustre on the annals of their country.

Among these, the late Sir Peter Parker, Bart. Captain of his Majesty's frigate *Menelaus*, must ever hold a distinguished place; whose short, but active life, was incessantly devoted to the cultivation of those high-born qualities, which are the sure foundations of moral excellence, and whose glorious death so brilliantly exemplifies their sublime influence in creating that heroic spirit, which, properly cherished in the minds of youth, becomes the best and proudest bulwark of the liberties of a state.

A short sketch, therefore, of the naval career of this lamented and excellent officer, will neither be without its interest nor advantage to society.

It is not that the life of Sir Peter Parker presents to the view of the reader any exploits on the great scale of extensive command, which his standing in the service, and his early years, placed beyond his reach. We rather exhibit it, as containing in its general result, an additional

instance illustrative of the moral of history, by showing the excellent fruit produced by an early cultivation of those generous passions which incite to the performance of noble actions ; and by holding out, as well in its progress as in its close, an useful lesson, deserving alike to be recorded and admired.

Captain Sir Peter Parker was descended from a very respectable and ancient family in Ireland, highly distinguished in the naval annals of Great Britain, and related to the noble families of Buckingham and Carlisle. Their pride was, to bleed in the service of their king ; four generations of them have devoted their lives to the naval service of their country. His ancestor, Archbishop Parker, was a learned and eminent divine ; who, after filling the see of Norwich, rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. His maternal grandfather was the Hon. Admiral Byron, so well known to the public for his valuable additions to nautical science, and for his gallant action, in the West Indies, with the French fleet, on the 6th of July 1779, off the island of Grenada ; when, as commander-in-chief in those seas, with nineteen sail of the line, he engaged, and compelled to sheer off, the French fleet under Count D'Estaing, consisting of thirty sail of the line, after a considerable loss on both sides : the French fleet taking advantage of the weather gage to effect their escape.

His father, Christopher Parker, Esq. of whom he was the eldest son, was also brought up to the navy ; he signalized himself on many occasions, and rose to be vice-admiral of the Blue squadron. His remaining sons, John and Charles, were likewise brought up to a military profession, and have already done honour to their descent, by a career of

active service, during the late war. The former as a captain in the royal artillery; the latter, as a lieutenant in the navy, wherein he has recently been raised to the rank of master and commander. Admiral Christopher Parker particularly distinguished himself at the taking of Fort Omoa, when in the *Lowestoffe* frigate he led the attack.

Admiral Christopher Parker was much noticed in his youth for abilities of a superior cast. At the early age of fourteen he was at the head of Westminster school. At seventeen he was made a post captain; and he died at the early age of thirty, an admiral; being younger, we believe, by seven years, than any officer ever before promoted to the same rank. Sir Peter's paternal grandfather was the late veteran head of the British navy, Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Bart. of Bassingbourne Hall, Essex; whose talents, professional skill, and intrepidity, have justly placed him among the foremost on the list of our British naval heroes. A preliminary and cursory review of the naval career and services of this distinguished admiral will not be misplaced in a Memoir which has for its object, to show how much they contributed by their effect and example, to produce that kindred spirit in the mind of his grandson, which so early attached him to the profession of his ancestors, and incited him to emulate the heroism of their deeds.*

Admiral Sir Peter Parker was the son of Admiral Christopher Parker, who commenced his professional career in the navy some years before the close of the seventeenth century. He followed it with the same

* The life of Admiral Sir Peter Parker will be found recorded more fully in the *Naval Chronicle*, from whence these particulars relating to him are taken.

CAPTAIN SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

perseverance which has since distinguished his descendants. After passing through its subordinate stages, he was promoted to the command of the *Speedwell* in January, 1712-13. In the year 1739, as post captain, he commanded the *Torbay*, an 80-gun ship, and served in the Channel fleet, under Sir John Norris. He was employed, afterwards, in the West Indies, under Sir Chaloner Ogle; and, on his return home, was promoted to the rank of rear-admiral. At the close of the war, he retired on half-pay, and died in Dublin, at a very advanced age, in the year 1763.

His son, Admiral Sir Peter Parker, he placed in the navy at the usual age. He was made a lieutenant in the year 1743. In the year 1749 he was made post captain, and appointed to the command of the *Margate* frigate in 1756, on the breaking out of the subsequent war. On the invasion of Minorca, Captain Parker was appointed to the *Woolwich*, of 44 guns, on the Leeward Island station. In this ship he distinguished himself at the capture of *Guadaloupe*, and was there appointed to the *Bristol* of 50 guns, in which he returned to England, and was appointed to the *Montague*, of 64 guns. He cruized in her some time in the Channel; where he captured several private ships of war, and other vessels. His next command was that of the *Buckingham*, of 70 guns; in the exercise of which he had the good fortune to distinguish himself greatly off *Belleisle* in 1761; and was afterwards, in the same ship, appointed with a squadron of five sail, to attack such of the enemy's ships as might be lying in Basque Road, and to destroy the works which had been erected in the Isle of Aix. The fortifications he completely destroyed, having previously been hotly engaged with a number of praams belonging to the enemy, carrying very heavy cannon, and considered by their inventors as extremely formidable; from the circumstance of

their lying remarkably low in the water, but which he obliged to sheer off with much precipitation and damage. From the Buckingham, on her being dismantled, he was appointed, in the year 1762, to the Terrible, a new ship, of 74 guns. The peace of 1763 suspended his professional labours, until the commencement of the American war, when he again resumed his naval duties. In 1772 he received the honour of knighthood; and in 1774, was nominated to the command of the Barfleur, of 90 guns. In 1775 he was appointed to a command on the American station, with the rank of commodore, and hoisted his broad pendant on board the Bristol, a ship newly launched,

In December 1775, Commodore Sir Peter Parker sailed from Portsmouth with a squadron of ships of war and a fleet of transports, having on board a large body of troops, under the command of Earl Cornwallis, destined for an attack on Charlestown, in South Carolina.

In consequence of contrary winds and various other baffling delays, the Commodore, with his fleet, did not reach the destined point of attack till the month of June 1776, which became the scene of one of the most sanguinary conflicts which occurred during that unhappy war; and which, although in its issue unsuccessful, displayed, on the part of Sir Peter Parker, the greatest personal intrepidity, combined with the highest professional skill, and justly conferred on him a celebrity, which, united with his other services, must for ever perpetuate his name.

The scene of this celebrated action was at Sullivan's island, which is about six miles below the town of Charlestown, and commands the

harbour. The attack commenced on the morning of the 25th of June. The English army, under Lord Cornwallis, was to have co-operated at the same instant, by crossing over to the island; but, as it was subsequently shown, a landing was impracticable. This threw the brunt of the whole attack on Sir Peter Parker and his little squadron, which ranged up gallantly and brought to against the fort, which defended the island; the fortifications of which were rendered extremely formidable by every effort of talent and ingenuity on the part of the Americans, and at a very great expence. The attack and the defence were equally desperate. The Bristol opened a furious cannonade, and although deprived of the co-operation of three frigates, from their having run upon some shoals, and stuck fast till the action was over; yet, even thus unsupported, Sir Peter Parker continued for nine hours to maintain the most undaunted struggle. The springs of the Bristol's cables being cut by the shot of the enemy, she lay for some time exposed to a dreadful raking fire of red-hot shot; she was twice in flames. Her commander, Captain Morris, died of his wounds, at the close of the action. The firmness with which the enemy stood to their guns, added to their cool and deliberate fire, made great havoc on board the ships; the Bristol's quarter-deck was twice entirely cleared of all, excepting the Commodore, who displayed the most intrepid courage and resolution. On the approach of night, Sir Peter Parker finding all hope of success at an end, and that the army could not cross that part of the river which the guides had represented as fordable, called off his shattered ships, and retired out of reach of the enemy's shot, having had in his own ship not less than forty men killed and seventy wounded, while his other ships that were in action suffered in proportion. The American loss, likewise, was very considerable, as most of their guns

were dismounted, and reinforcements were continually pouring into the fort during the action.

We subjoin Commodore Sir Peter Parker's own narrative of this brilliant action, so well deserving of being repeated in a biographical sketch of the naval career of his grandson.*

Sir Peter Parker was next employed with a squadron of ships of war, in the month of July, to cover the attack on New York; and made a naval diversion, which perfectly succeeded. In the month of December of the same year, he rendered an essential service to his country by the reduction of Rhode Island, blockading at the same time the enemy's principal naval force in the harbour of Providence. He was then appointed to the command at New York; in which station he remained until he was promoted to the rank of rear-admiral of the Blue squadron in May 1777. In the month of November following, he was appointed to command on the Jamaica station; and in the month of January 1778, he was farther promoted to be rear-admiral of the White. In the month of March 1778, Rear-admiral Sir Peter Parker arrived at Port Royal, and assumed the command of his Majesty's squadron, in the Bristol, of 50 guns.

In February 1779, while yet on the Jamaica station, he was advanced to be vice-admiral of the Blue. Here he planned the celebrated attack on the strong fortress of St. Fernando De Omoa, in the bay of Dulce, on the coast of South America; the subsequent capture of which,

* Appendix, No. I.

amply rewarded the brave assailants for their bold attempt: and here his own son, the late Rear-admiral Christopher Parker, became particularly distinguished.

In the course of this year a number of captures were made by Vice-admiral Sir Peter Parker's cruizers; amongst others, *La Prudente*, a French frigate of 36 guns, and the *Saint Carlos*, a Spanish private ship of war, of 50 guns, laden with warlike stores and 5000 stand of arms.

On the 16th of September, in this year, Sir Peter Parker was made vice-admiral of the White. He continued his command at Jamaica during the year 1791, uniformly successful while he held it, and producing, by his unremitting exertions, such an influx of wealth into Jamaica, as had never been known before. During his residence in the island he endeared himself to the inhabitants by his personal virtues, while his rapid advancement of its prosperity, and constant attachment to its interests, secured for him their gratitude and respect. He returned to England, the following year, in his Majesty's ship the *Sandwich*, having had the honour of conveying to the British shores the Count de Grasse, and several French officers of rank, who were taken on the 12th of April by Lord Rodney, and whose captivity was softened to them during the passage by the most polite and generous attentions on the part of the admiral.

Sir Peter Parker's progress in the navy had been regular, steady, and uniform; his private and professional character stood unimpeached, and shortly after his arrival in England, as a reward for his numerous ser-

vices, he had the honour of being raised to the dignity of a baronet of Great Britain.

In the year 1787, Sir Peter was elected for the borough of Maldon, and retained his seat to the close of that parliament. In the debate on Lord Rawdon's motion, respecting a promotion of admirals, wherein some gallant officers had been passed over, Sir Peter Parker made an animated speech, bearing all the features of that manly, generous spirit, which alike distinguishes and adorns the character of a British sailor.

On the 14th of September 1787, Sir Peter Parker was advanced to the rank of admiral of the Blue squadron. On the commencement of the war with France in the year 1793, Sir Peter Parker hoisted his flag on board the Royal William, of 84 guns, as commander in chief at Portsmouth, which station he filled with that splendour and hospitality which will long be gratefully remembered, as well by the navy as by the inhabitants of that town.

On the 11th of April 1794, Sir Peter Parker was advanced to be admiral of the White squadron. He continued commander in chief at Portsmouth, until the year 1799, when, on the death of Lord Howe, he obtained the summit of his honours in becoming admiral of the fleet.

Having thus reached the highest dignity to which his profession could lead, he continued to enjoy it, as the reward of a life virtuously and nobly passed, with the general respect and approbation of the navy and the public, till the month of December, 1811; when, yielding to

the pressure of years, and bodily infirmities, he finally terminated his useful and glorious life, at the advanced age of 94, universally esteemed and regretted, the laurel and the cypress alike bending over his tomb.

He was succeeded in his appointment of Admiral of the Fleet by his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, whose professional qualifications stand so high in the estimation of the navy and the public; and who in the presence of those illustrious Sovereigns who honored this country last year with their visit, filled this high office at the head of the British fleet, with that dignity and lustre which became the occasion, and to which his own royal rank imparted an increased and appropriate splendour.

Thus, three generations of admirals preceded the late Captain Sir Peter Parker, in the service of their king. From this distinguished race of maritime heroes, descended the excellent officer whose heroic career we shall now proceed to record.

It was the misfortune of the subject of the present Memoir to lose in infancy both his parents. Sir Peter's mother, Miss Byron, aunt to the present Lord Byron, whose mournful Muse in strains of elegiac beauty has wept the fall of his gallant relative,* was one of the most celebrated beauties of her day, moving in the higher circles of fashion, and distinguished not less for every virtue than for every grace. She died in early life. A portion of her beauty was inherited by her son. He seemed also to be born with a predilection for the noble profession of which he subsequently made choice, and as if naval blood alone was flowing in his veins, he early contemplated with delight the bright path

* Appendix No. II.

already trodden, with such distinction, by his ancestors, and made choice of the navy for his profession, as soon as he was permitted to have a choice on the subject himself.

He was educated at Westminster School, where he shewed very promising abilities, and from whence he was removed by his grandfather at the age of 13, to be placed in the navy, and went to sea with Sir Roger Curtis, in the Lancaster, to the Cape of Good Hope, under whose eye he acquired the rudiments of his profession. Shortly before he reached the Cape, as well as while there, Mr. Parker met with two accidents which had nearly proved fatal to him. Off Cape Lagullus, in a calm, as he was endeavouring in a boat with another young midshipman to catch a blue shark that appeared under the stern of the ship, his little messmate in heaving the bait struck the sharp iron hook to which it was affixed, with such violence into the back part of his head as, from the surgical operation which was necessary to extract it, and the severe wounds both occasioned, brought on a fever which considerably impaired his health. On landing, when he was able to be moved, he was sent to a farm for a change of air, under the care of a hospitable Dutch planter; and when he had nearly recovered from the effects of this accidental wound, a fierce wolf-dog in the neighbourhood, breaking from his chain, flew at him, and seizing him by the calf of his leg, tore it so dreadfully as for many weeks to confine him to his bed, and threatened at one period the necessity of amputation;—all flesh wounds, from some peculiarity in the air of that climate, being extremely difficult to heal, and having a great tendency to mortification. He recovered, however, from both these accidents through the skill and humanity with which he was treated. It was his fate, at a subsequent period, when employed as a midshipman on the impress service, in

heading the gang to which he was attached, to have his jaw fractured in a conflict with some men who resisted being pressed, from which he was likewise very ill for some time; so that he appears to have been early destined to encounter the harder rubs of life.

In the Lancaster Mr. Parker first saw active service, the Lancaster having, during a cruise off the Mauritius, captured several vessels, and cut out of the harbour of Port Louis from under the batteries a large Hamburg ship, on which occasion her first lieutenant and several of her men were killed and wounded.

His first years were devoted to whatever could improve him in his profession, and recommend him to his superiors. He soon evinced, that the ruling passion of his mind was a gallant daring, and an ardent spirit of enterprise, which were the fore-runners of the notice he afterwards secured from those distinguished admirals under whom he served, in various quarters of the globe, and especially of that illustrious hero Lord Nelson, who early marked his rising talents, and aspiring courage, and predicted of them, that they would one day render this young officer the pride and ornament of the profession to which he belonged.

On the return of Mr. Parker to England, in the *Arethusa* frigate, in the year 1801, after passing his examination at the Admiralty with great credit, he was made lieutenant by Lord St. Vincent on the 21st of October of the same year. Shortly afterwards he sailed on the expedition against Ferrol and Cadiz, and to Egypt in the *Leda* frigate, Captain (now Admiral Sir George) Hope; and under the command and example of this excellent and distinguished officer he ever

professed to have acquired that improved knowledge of his profession which subsequently rendered it so much an object of his delight, and enabled him to become one of its most shining ornaments. Having witnessed the landing of the troops in Aboukir Bay, and shared in the glories of that day, he was removed from the *Leda* into the *Foudroyant*, bearing the flag of the commander in chief, Lord Keith. He was next appointed to the *Renown*, Sir John Borlase Warren, at that time down the Mediterranean, and placed in the *Minerva* as an acting lieutenant, until he could join the *Renown*. While in the *Minerva*, cruising off the coast of Italy, this ship had the good fortune to capture two French frigates, *Le Succés*, and *La Bravoure*, which she carried safe into Minorca.

Here Mr. Parker met the *Renown*, and took his station on board her as fourth lieutenant. From the *Renown* he was appointed by Sir John Borlase Warren to be third lieutenant of the *Alexander* frigate, Captain Dixon, and while in her, he saw much service at the siege of Porto Ferrajo. He served afterwards for a short while in the *Narcissus*. It was in the course of these services, while yet a midshipman, that he was wounded in the thigh and the cheek, and had his coat shot through in several places. This coat, on his return home, his venerable grandfather, in approbation of his conduct, and proud of the rising talents of his grandson (then only sixteen), hung up in the hall of his seat at Bassingbourne Hall, Essex, as a trophy, which he would often exhibit with exultation to his naval friends.

Mr. Parker was for some time a lieutenant in the *Victory*, under the immediate command and eye of his great friend and patron, the immortal Nelson. The occasion of his being placed in this ship was not

less creditable to the professional character of Mr. Parker, than to the heart of that renowned admiral, whose transcendant fame must be coeval with the duration of time. His grandfather, Sir Peter Parker, gratified by the early promise of future excellence, in his grandson, and conceiving him destined to uphold in his family the naval reputation he had himself acquired, procured his appointment to the Victory, and united with Lord St. Vincent, at that period at the head of the Admiralty, in recommending him for early promotion to the notice of the commander in chief on the Mediterranean station, the illustrious admiral we have mentioned. This recommendation drew from Lord Nelson the following reply to Admiral Sir Peter Parker, so truly characteristic of the excellent heart that great man was known to possess, and which here, in honour of both, may not unseasonably be inserted.

LORD NELSON TO ADMIRAL SIR PETER PARKER.

“ October 14 1803.

“ Your grandson came to me with your kind letter of August 20th on the 6th October. Nothing could be more gratifying to my feelings than receiving him. I have kept him as lieutenant of the Victory, and shall not part with him until I can make him a post captain: which you may be assured I shall lose no time in doing. It is the only opportunity ever afforded me of shewing that my feelings of gratitude to you are as warm and alive as when you first took me by the hand. I owe all my honours to you, and I am proud to acknowledge it to all the world. Lord St. Vincent has most strongly and kindly desired your grandson's promotion, therefore I can only be the instrument of expediting it.

“ Believe me, ever, my dear Sir PETER,

“ Your most grateful and sincerely attached friend,

“ NELSON AND BRONTE.”

In consequence of this letter, Lieutenant Parker was placed on the quarter-deck of the Victory. In a situation such as this, it could not be, but that a young officer of his eager, we might almost say impetuous feelings, would draw from the bright example before him, virtues which should animate his course, and stamp the character of his future life. In the Victory he was not only to be trained to arms and disregard of death, but he was to find in the character of Lord Nelson that warmth and energy of soul which adds a lustre to every noble quality, and an interest to every action. And here, in truth, it was, that those feelings which were before but as germs half-ripened in the bud, expanded themselves, and formed into fixed and settled principles of action. Henceforth his soul was filled entirely with that ardent spirit of distinction, that thirst of professional knowledge and fame, and, generally, those heroic virtues which blazed so brightly in the character of his great model—contempt of difficulty and danger—and that proud indifference to the acquisition of wealth in the exercise of a noble profession, which constitute the very life and essence of the naval and military character. By the cultivation of these high qualities it was, that he had the good fortune to acquire not only the friendship of Lord Nelson, but that his conduct as a seaman and officer, drew from his Lordship those encomiums on his professional character, and those predictions of his future progress and distinction in the service, which are to be found in Lord Nelson's letters to his grandfather, and which this gallant young officer lived long enough, in a considerable degree, to realize.

From the Victory he was promoted by the Earl of St. Vincent, while at the head of the Admiralty, on the 8th of May 1804, to be master and commander, and appointed to the Weasel sloop of war, in reward

of his gallant conduct. While yet commander of the *Weasel*, he sailed to join the British fleet under his illustrious friend off Cadiz, where he distinguished himself much by his vigilance and activity in watching the motions of the enemy in the harbour, to which service he was appointed, under the command of the Honorable Captain Blackwood, who at that period commanded the *Euryalus* frigate, and was senior officer of the in-shore squadron appointed to watch the French and Spanish fleets blockaded in Cadiz. Captain Parker was the first officer who made the signal that the enemy was coming out, which, with unexampled rapidity, was communicated to Lord Nelson, who was several leagues out of sight of land, by Captain (now Admiral the Honorable Sir Henry) Blackwood, an officer alike destined, if he lives, and the occasion should occur, to enrol himself on the highest list of naval heroes; and who had the good fortune, in addition to his own well-earned honours in the profession, to obtain the applause and secure the confidence and friendship of Lord Nelson, who entertained the highest opinion of his professional talents; and therefore, at a moment when the fate of Europe hung on the event of that day, selected him for this critical trust; to which, from his active and able discharge of it both before and during the action which immediately ensued, both his country and the fame of Lord Nelson owe so much.

Prior to the engagement Captain Parker was detached, by order of Lord Nelson, to recall Sir Thomas Louis, whom with five sail of the line he had sent up the Straits of Gibraltar to water, in the hope that the enemy, seeing his force so considerably reduced, would be tempted to try the issue of a battle. The expectation of Lord Nelson was not disappointed; but Captain Parker was, in consequence, absent from the battle of Trafalgar; and no language can describe his sorrow,

when, returning with the squadron of Sir Thomas Louis, which he had rapidly overtaken—a telegraphic signal was made from Lord Collingwood's fleet, announcing “ *A signal victory—but Lord Nelson killed!* ”—The consternation was general.—No one thought of the victory—its cost was alone the object of universal lamentation. To the public grief was superadded, the personal affliction excited in his mind by a reverence for the great qualities of his illustrious friend, and a grateful sense of the kindness with which he had ever distinguished him. In a moment, the friend and patron of his hopes—the pride and prop of his country—the stay and model of his profession was gone—and his heart for a long time remained saddened by the impression of a loss which he considered to be not less a national calamity, than an individual misfortune.

Shortly after this ever-glorious contest, Captain Parker, in consequence of the recommendation of him by Lord Nelson to Lord Collingwood, some time prior to it, was promoted to the command of the *Melpomene* frigate of 38 guns, and made post captain on the 22d of October 1805, being then under twenty years of age.

He had now attained the summit of his wishes, in being raised to the rank of a post captain in the British navy; and from that period until the hour of his death, his mind was entirely occupied with the duties of his profession, devoting itself, without intermission, to them alone, and to the fair acquisition, in the bright discharge of them, of that gratifying applause which he ever felt to be their best reward.

For some time after his promotion he continued with the fleet under Lord Collingwood, by whom he was detached in company with the *Orion*, *Endymion*, and *Weasel*, on the 8th of December 1805, to scour

the Mediterranean, in quest of a squadron of the enemy's frigates, reported to have sailed from Genoa under Jerome Buonaparte. They were shortly afterwards dispersed by a tremendous hurricane, wherein the *Melpomene* had nearly foundered, and was brought into Malta almost a wreck. In this awful storm, wherein so many vessels were wrecked, the nautical skill and presence of mind of this young commander were eminently conspicuous; and at the moment when the sea was making a breach over the *Melpomene*, and that, at times, she appeared to be going down—when despair was painted on every countenance, and hope seemed to have abandoned the stoutest heart; at this critical period, we have been assured by an officer of the ship, who shared in the dangers of the scene, that the firm and collected manner in which Captain Parker (then under twenty years of age) still continued, while thus hovering on the brink of eternity, to exhort his crew to a continuance of those manly efforts by which they were ultimately saved, excited the admiration of all; and to the invigorating effect of his gallant example, thus cheering his men and officers to their duty, and inspiring them by the picture of his own confident and tranquil mind, amidst the horrors of such a tempest, they ascribed, under the favour of divine Providence, their being finally enabled to survive this storm. We have subjoined an interesting narrative of this event, from the journal of the *Melpomene*, which appeared in the *NAVAL CHRONICLE* for the year in which it occurred, and which cannot fail, by the younger part of the profession, at least, to be perused with interest, and, perhaps, advantage.*

At Malta Captain Parker arrived in time to render an essential

* See Appendix, III.

service to the governor of this important fortress. A most alarming mutiny broke out in the garrison, the day before his arrival, and the mutineers, consisting of a Maltese regiment, newly raised, had seized on Fort Rarscorli, and shutting themselves up therein, stood a siege of ten days before they surrendered themselves to government. Captain Parker, in the most prompt and judicious manner, with permission from the governor, landed his seamen and marines, and actively co-operated with the garrison in reducing the insurgents. On their surrender, immediate examples being necessary, several of them were led out to execution; among these was a young soldier, whose extreme youth and apparent penitence seemed, to Captain Parker, to render him a deserving object of mercy—he interceded with the Governor, and his intercession was not made in vain. With that good heart he was known to possess, he has been often heard to dwell on this circumstance as one of the happiest moments of his life.

The Melpomene having been repaired and refitted at Malta, Captain Parker again put to sea, early in February 1806; and his activity became conspicuous, by the capture of several of the enemy's vessels and privateers; among others, La Madona, vessel of war. He was peculiarly successful in harassing the enemy's coasting trade, and in those brilliant boat attacks which so eminently contribute towards training the British seamen and officers to those deeds of daring and of hardihood, and to that confident and fearless spirit for which they stand so confessedly unrivalled; from whence their noblest victories are traced, and on which the true maritime superiority and greatness of their country are founded.

From various attacks of this kind, by the boats of the Melpomene, we

have selected the following most brilliant action, as deserving the fairest page of history, and which has, already, indeed, received from the pen of the biographer all the admiration due to such distinguished valour.

On the evening of the 3d of July 1806, Captain Parker detached the boats of the *Melpomene* to cruize in shore, on the coast near Leghorn, under the command of Lieutenant Thompson, who was accompanied in the barge by Lieutenant Gascoigne, of the royal marines, and Mr. Butler, master's mate. On the morning of the 4th, several vessels appeared, and the boats separated in chase. After a long pull, the barge came up with a large French settee, armed with four 6-pounders, twelve mounted musketoons, and small arms. They were obliged to pull up in face of the enemy's fire; and so able was the defence, that before they could get along side, Lieutenant Thompson and five seamen were killed, six desperately wounded, and several others disabled for the time. The ship and other boats were at a considerable distance; but the survivors persevered, and hooked on. Mr. Butler, Lieutenant Gascoigne, and Serjeant Thomas Milligan, were the only persons enabled to board, at which time the enemy's crew consisted of eighteen men, three of whom were killed and fifteen made prisoners. The conduct of Serjeant Milligan peculiarly excited the admiration of his brave comrades and captain, and was most honorably reported to Sir Sidney Smith (under whose orders Captain Parker was acting) in a handsome letter from Captain Parker. Serjeant Milligan being in the bow of the barge, was the first man that boarded the settee; and, on his leaping on the deck six muskets were presented in his face, the fatal effects of which he rapidly avoided by throwing himself instantly into the midst of the enemy's crew. Owing to the number of killed and wounded in

the barge, and the settee continuing under sail, only five men were able to follow the serjeant, and after some resistance the enemy were obliged to retreat and disperse, and six of them leaped into their own boat, carrying their arms and ammunition with them. Serjeant Milligan pursued, and fearing that they might do considerable mischief if they pulled way from alongside with their muskets with them, and knowing that the barge could not follow, he jumped down into the middle of them. He was instantly seized and thrown overboard; but, in the struggle, grappled and carried one of the enemy with him, whom he killed in the water with his cutlass. The other boats of the *Melpomene* now coming up, every exertion was made to save Serjeant Milligan, who was seen swimming a-stern of the settee, apparently very faint, having received several wounds during the action. One of the lieutenants of the ship, seeing an oar close behind him, called to Milligan to get hold of it, in order to receive some assistance till the boat could get up to him, which afterwards picked him up. On his being asked, when safe on board, if he had gained the assistance of the oar floating by him, he replied—"No, Sir, I did not know the enemy had all surrendered; and I could not bear the idea of turning my back on the enemy's vessel." The Patriotic Fund rewarded this brave fellow with forty pounds. In this way did Captain Parker train his crew to the most spirited contempt of the enemy, and to the most daring feats in arms.*

Soon after this, it was the good fortune of Captain Parker to be stationed with the *Melpomene* off Gaeta, to assist in the defence of that important fortress. Here his zeal and bravery were conspicuous; he

* The reader will find the whole of this gallant action thus detailed in the *NAVAL CHRONICLE*.

was seen among the foremost in some desperate sallies against the enemy, whom he considerably annoyed with Congreve's rockets; and his conduct was rewarded with the grateful thanks and admiration of its intrepid defender, the Prince of Hesse, whose long and brilliant defence of Gaeta is yet alive in the public recollection.

Towards the middle of the year 1808, the *Melpomene* was sent to Vera Cruz, to bring home, on account of the government of Spain, as well as of individuals, the largest freight of treasure which for some years had been entrusted to a British frigate; a mark of confidence well deserved by Captain Parker, from the excellent state of discipline and equipment in which the *Melpomene* was invariably kept. This service was quickly performed; and, after landing three millions of dollars at Cadiz, Captain Parker returned to Portsmouth in December 1808; arriving there in the short space of thirty-five days, six of which were passed at Cadiz. In the course of his voyage home the yellow fever broke out in his ship, and carried off thirty-six of his crew. The contagion spread, and one of his young midshipmen was seized with this cruel disorder. Aware of its fatal tendency, yet alive to that active and generous humanity which was a prominent feature in his character, and which so justly endeared him to his crew, notwithstanding the earnest advice of his surgeon to the contrary, and that he was on his way home to be married to the lady whose hapless fate is now to mourn his fall, Captain Parker had him immediately brought into his own cabin, and with an utter disregard of danger to himself from this contagious scourge, nursed him with parental attention, to the moment of his death, administering to him his medicines, and catching from him, as might have been expected, the disease. The fever attacked him with peculiar force; a severe delirium ensued; for several days his

recovery was despaired of, and when all hope was at an end, a gracious Providence intervened to spare his life for a more glorious close. This is an action of small brilliancy, perhaps, but it is one surely well deserving notice in a sailor's life—it is one which those who knew him will love to dwell on; an action, as the poet goes on (in the same place whence the motto of this memoir is drawn) to observe—

“ Which lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed.”

After a short refit at Portsmouth, Captain Parker was sent, in the month of March 1809, while yet scarcely recovered from the effects of the yellow fever, to cruize in the Baltic against the Danes, where he continued to display the same enterprising spirit and zeal he had already evinced in the Mediterranean and Southern Seas. In these boisterous latitudes, at this tempestuous season of the year, he had to combat the elements. He was assailed by the most dreadful gales, but continued, nevertheless, to keep his station, and harass the enemy severely. During this cruize he captured a Danish privateer. On the 1st of May he drove a Danish man-of-war cutter on shore at Huilbo (a harbour in Jutland), and determined to destroy her, notwithstanding the batteries which protected her; he anchored the *Melpomene* in nineteen feet water, and carried her by boarding in the most gallant style, under the directions of Lieutenants Rennie and Plumridge, who, although exposed to a most galling fire, succeeded in destroying her, with some other vessels, with little loss to themselves. The enemy collected in great numbers on the shore, and were supposed to have suffered considerably, from the fire of the *Melpomene* and that of her

launch's carronade. An account of this spirited action appeared in the London Gazette, early after it took place.

Shortly after this service Captain Parker, in company with the Implacable, captured nine vessels laden with timber, spars, cordage, and other warlike stores, in the gulf of Narva; and, with the boats of the Melpomene and other ships, took six Russian gun-boats, sunk one, and captured twelve vessels, laden with naval stores.

The health of Captain Parker was now, for a moment, to yield to the severities of long service in the most trying climates. He had not entirely recovered from the effects of the yellow fever on a constitution naturally delicate, when he was suddenly ordered to the Baltic. This rapid transition of climate so affected his health as to compel him to solicit a short leave of absence from the Admiralty; which being granted, had the desired effect of re-establishing it, and of enabling him early to return to his duty.

In the interim Captain Warren was sent out by the Admiralty, as acting captain, to replace Captain Parker in the Melpomene; and he commanded her in so gallant a style as amply to compensate to the public and her crew for the absence of her commander. Whilst she was under the charge of Captain Warren, a considerable number of Danish gun-boats, availing themselves of their superior force, and under cover of a calm and dark night, attacked the Melpomene with much spirit, and considerable danger to her safety; and, after a sharp action, which lasted about forty minutes, were only finally driven off by the superior skill and courage of Captain Warren and her brave crew, who,

availing themselves of the wind getting up, bore down among them and put them to flight.

On this occasion a circumstance occurred which merits to be mentioned here, as displaying in an equally interesting and amiable point of view, as well the heart as the professional character and feelings of Captain Parker. His grandfather was the first to communicate to him the intelligence of the ship having been in action, and that she had been gallantly defended and considerably damaged, relating to him the particulars as communicated to himself at the Admiralty. With the most lively emotion he burst into tears, exclaiming he would rather have died than have been absent from his ship at such a moment; and, overpowered by his feelings, left the room, adding, as he went out—"Warren is a brave fellow, and would fight her well." The venerable admiral, extremely affected by this sudden ebullition of the most generous and exalted sensibility, said, in a tremulous tone of voice, to a friend who witnessed the scene, and whose feelings partook of the lively emotion it was so calculated to excite—"I like this in Peter; it shews that his heart is in the right place, and that he is made of fine stuff. These are the indications of future distinction, if he lives."

The *Malpome* being an old ship, and severely shattered by this engagement, wherein several of her crew were killed and wounded, she was obliged to return to port; and on her arrival at Sheerness, was pronounced to be unfit for further repairs as a ship of war, and put out of commission, and paid off in the month of September 1800.

and ardent mind had been little prepared by previous habits. Ten years of incessant service, amidst such varied scenes of toil and danger, had rendered him a stranger to the calm of inactive life, and to that *tædium vitæ* which is oftentimes its consequence on minds not previously trained in the school of philosophy, to the tranquil enjoyments of lettered ease. Continued action (in which the ancient philosopher has made happiness to consist) was the ruling principle of his mind; and so well was he aware, that in the valuable occupation of time are to be found the pure and genuine sources of human happiness, that, although married to a wife he tenderly loved, and blessed with children, who were alike the objects of his dearest affections, he never sought to waste in inglorious ease the morning of a life which he felt belonged to his country and not to himself. From the more stern duties of the service he never turned to pursue the allurements of domestic ease. In every feeling he was a public being—ardent—zealous—disinterested—ever ready for service wherever he was sent; never objecting to station or climate; always animated and willing in the discharge of his duty; and equally aloof from petulant remonstrance or captious complaint; being too well grounded in his profession not to know that obedience to authority is the elementary principle on which it rests.

In the pause, therefore, of a temporary suspension of the more active duties of his profession, it became the object of Captain Parker still to devote his mind to the public cause, which was his ruling passion. The interests of his country, not less than its glory, were ever present to his view. To become one of the representatives of the people, whose battles from his earliest years he had been taught to fight, and whose rights and interests he was well desirous of maintaining in the Senate of his country, appeared to him an occupation more worthy of the more

glorious one he had so long exercised. Availing himself, therefore, of a favourable opportunity of being elected into Parliament, for the borough of Wexford, he was returned member for that place, in the month of March 1810, and took his seat shortly after.

Here, although removed from his more accustomed element, he performed his duty with zeal and spirit, actuated by the purest patriotism, expressing his feelings with that honest eloquence which will always gain attention, in an English Parliament, to the brave defenders of the state, remote from the corroding influence of party, and stedfastly looking only to the good of his country, with that firm and noble independence of character he was known to possess, and which seems, in a manner, to be the distinctive feature of a British seaman.

The following is too remarkable a feature in his short parliamentary life, and does too much credit to the superior foresight and judgment of Captain Parker, not to merit a place in this imperfect sketch of his public career and services.

He took his seat in the House of Commons on the 9th of March 1810, On that day the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. *Percival*, moved in a Committee of Supply for the grant of £ 980,000 to his Majesty for the support of the military exertions in Portugal, to assist our old and faithful ally in expelling the enemy from her territory, and recovering her independence.

This grant, it is well known, was powerfully resisted by the opposition.—The most eminent members of it, in both Houses of Parliament, loudly deprecated the measure as an impolitic and prodigal expenditure

of the public money, calculated only to increase our own difficulties, and prolong the miseries of Portugal—arguing, from utter want of spirit in the people of that kingdom to assert their liberties—that the Portuguese soldiery, dastardly in disposition, could never be employed to any useful purpose; and that if brought into the field against the French, they would be seen to fly, and leave us to become the dupes and the victims of their cowardice—and it was broadly maintained and predicted by the ablest leaders of this party, that before the 1st of May there would not be found a British soldier remaining in the peninsula, except as a prisoner; and that true policy called upon us to husband our resources and keep our army at home, instead of exhausting ourselves by wasting the one and the other, in a hopeless struggle on the Continent.

Nor was this the opinion alone of retired theorists. Practical and experienced statesmen and officers were foremost in maintaining it. It is useful sometimes to turn to the opinions and predictions of politicians and statesmen, for the purpose of seeing how far they have, or have not, been verified by events; and from the parliamentary debates of that period we shall select, from among other opinions, the sentiments of two justly-distinguished members of the House who warmly opposed the grant.

An honourable General, who had recently served in Portugal, said, “He felt it his duty to express his opinion as a military man upon this occasion. He could not indeed sit silent and allow the delusion to go forth that Portugal could derive safety from the armament referred to

in the motion. He would put the question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or to any gentleman who had spoken on the other side, whether he seriously believed that 30,000 men could be found fit for military service in all Portugal, or whether even half that number could be produced capable of efficiency? With every disposition to do ample justice to the activity and skill of his gallant friend (General Beresford), he thought it quite absurd to calculate upon the formation of such a corps of Portuguese as any officer could rely upon, to act apart from a British force, or to afford any effective aid in the event of invasion. Upon such an occasion, indeed, the campaign must be formed by an army composed of very different materials from those which it would be rational to look for among the Portuguese people. The opinion which he entertained upon this subject derived additional confirmation from some intelligence which he had recently received from a friend who had the fullest opportunity of personal observation. In fact, the Portuguese levies were of such a description that he should regret the fate of our gallant troops, if called upon to co-operate with them. Indeed he saw no use to which such levies were convertible, while there was too much reason to apprehend their tendency to produce inconvenience and danger, and therefore he could not approve of the motion."

Such were the sentiments of this gallant officer, whose brows were fresh encircled with the laurels of Vimieira, and which we select only from the more prominent weight to which his military opinions are entitled.

Another as justly distinguished member of the opposition,* said

* Parliamentary Debates.

“ He believed there was not a man in the country, except the right honorable gentleman himself (*Mr. Perceval*) who would believe that the money could produce any beneficial effects. A delay of no less than thirteen months in answering *Mr. Canning’s* communication had taken place, and at last the people of this country were called on to pay a million of money at a time when all hope was lost, and when the efforts of Spain were about to be confined within the walls of Cadiz. He esteemed it now to be a hopeless cause; but if it were not so, the embodying the number of troops, now proposed, would not contribute to its success. He feared, whatever might be the decision of the House, before the levies proposed were made, that part of the continent (*Portugal*) where they were proposed to be made, would not be in the possession of this country. If we sent any more troops to *Portugal*, he was satisfied it would only be to witness the embarkation of the army we had there already.”

Opinions thus solemnly delivered, by such eminent authorities, appeared to Captain Parker calculated to mislead the nation into a false estimate of the power and resources of *Portugal*, and of the temper and disposition of its inhabitants; and to invite, from their effect, that spirit of despondence so baneful to the public weal, and to which in his own profession they are generally strangers. Although he had only taken his seat that day, yet, under a sense of duty, and a conviction, from personal observation, that such sentiments were alike impolitic and ill-founded, he rose, and on the spur of the moment, delivered the following manly opinion; which shews him, as the event has since happily established, to have possessed a sagacity and soundness of judgment on this occasion, which embraced in one view, the resources and interests of his country, and foresaw the danger which would result

from her desertion of the public cause. "The gallant General," he said, "and other Members who had preceded him in the debate, had argued that the cause was hopeless—He denied it; for while there was the life still existing, and yet animating the struggles of the sister kingdom, there was hope. He would ask—Did it become a generous power, like ^{*}Great Britain, to abandon a friend and old ally in the moment of distress? Gentlemen argue that our assistance can do no *good*—but will not our refusal of that assistance do material *harm*? The Portuguese troops had been abused, as men unwilling or incapable of defending themselves; put them under capable and experienced British officers, and he would warrant they could be made something of. Let such men as the victorious Lord Wellington or the gallant Marshal Beresford, have but the leading of them, and he would pledge his existence that they would never run away. The grant, he was convinced, would answer its end; it was not only wise, but, at such a critical period in the fate of Portugal, it was indispensable. For these reasons he should, therefore, vote in support of the motion."

Such was the prompt and more encouraging opinion of Captain Parker. How well events have verified its correctness, the peace of Europe and the independence of Portugal have since most gloriously attested. To the happy effect of this well-timed grant, combined with the prior influence of our naval victories, may be justly ascribed, under the favour of divine Providence, the fortunate change which has since ensued in the general state of Europe. The spirit it excited universally throughout Portugal—the hopes it raised—the inflexible perseverance with which his Majesty's Ministers followed up the just principles which led to this parliamentary aid—the brave and well-disciplined Portuguese army it created—the series of victories which were its fruits, and the

cheering spectacle these exhibited, of the routed columns of the flying enemy, once more revived the drooping hopes of Europe, and invited her again to break her chains. The days of Marlborough became revived on the plains of Salamanca. The shouts of British triumph destroyed the spell of French invincibility ; and the reiterated victories of Wellington, by giving confidence to the Russian and Austrian cabinets, and to the Spanish and Portuguese nations, as well as to the other suffering states of Europe, once more rekindled that general confederacy against the colossal and misused power of France, which redeemed not only Portugal, but all the continental kingdoms of Europe from her imperious and overwhelming grasp, and entitled the British nation, and especially its executive government, to be justly considered as the saviours of the civilized world.

In the month of May, 1810, the health of Captain Parker being sufficiently recovered to return to the duties of his profession, he was appointed to the command of a new frigate of a large class, the *Menelaus*, of 38 guns, which had been recently launched at Plymouth, and had, while building, been the favorite object of his wishes. She was, in all respects, worthy of her gallant commander, to whom was committed the care of fitting her for sea in the most efficient and expeditious manner. This fine frigate is still in commission, and we may safely say, that, from the pride Captain Parker took in her, as well as from the judicious manner in which he rigged and equipped her, his Majesty's service never boasted a frigate, in all respects, more highly appointed, and rarely one so well arranged in her interior. The lightness of her rigging was universally admired, it being the object of her commander to blend neatness as well as utility, with every part of her equipment ; and, whether serving with the fleet from India, at the attack of the Isle of France, or in the

Mediterranean, under the command of that great and excellent officer Lord Exmouth, equally was the *Menelaus* the admiration of every fleet to which she was attached, from the superior style in which she manœuvred, and the incomparable discipline and order into which she was brought by the skill and unceasing perseverance of Captain Parker: nor was it possible for the most experienced officer to point out any part about her which could be improved, either with respect to her neatness, her cleanliness, or the easy and ready manner in which the necessary duties of the ship were carried on, either in port or at sea. Many very experienced officers have visited her arrangements, and allowed they were the neatest and most compact they had ever seen, expressing their surprise that the stores of so large a ship could be so judiciously disposed of, as to be wholly unseen, and leave sufficient room to get at the wings in action, without the smallest article lying in the way. He never failed visiting the decks every day, when the service admitted of it, attended by his first lieutenant and two midshipmen, which kept alive in his men that spirit of cleanliness so necessary for the health and comfort of his officers and crew. To a lover of good order and discipline, the gun-deck was a most gratifying sight, being always kept so exceedingly clear and clean. The active eye of her captain was every where, to render her perfect as a ship of war; and in this object he eminently succeeded.

In this fine frigate Captain Parker was dispatched, by the Lords of the Admiralty, in the month of July 1810, to St. Helena, to convoy home the East India fleet. On his arrival there, after a very expeditious voyage, he found the island in a state of consternation, from the painful intelligence which had reached it the day before, of the loss of our maritime superiority off the Mauritius, by the sudden and

unexpected capture of two of our blockading frigates, the *Africaine* and the *Nercide*, whose immortal captains covered themselves with glory in the unequal contest; in which Captain Corbett, of the *Africaine*, fell; and Captain Willoughby, of the *Nercide*, was desperately wounded. By these unfortunate events Captain (now Admiral Sir Josias) Rowley, the senior officer on the station, was left in a state of great peril, from the alarming inferiority of force to which these captures reduced him; but from which, however, he as rapidly extricated himself, with heroism and success.

Captain Parker, participating, as a naval officer, in a more intense degree, in the general feeling that prevailed on the receipt of this disastrous intelligence, felt it his immediate duty, at every hazard, to violate his instructions, and hasten to the relief of Captain Rowley; taking fearlessly upon himself the responsibility of such a step, and leaving to the justice of his country duly to appreciate, as well its propriety as the motive in which it originated. He felt that he was acting without orders, but he was conscious that he was doing what was right for the service of his king, and he had learnt in the school of Nelson that "Political courage in an officer abroad is as highly necessary as military courage."* He was aware that, in so doing, he abandoned great interests and individual advantage; but the honour of his country and the good of his Majesty's service being, at all times, the paramount sentiment of his breast, he decided at once on this bold and judicious measure, which afterwards received the applause which it deserved.

Accordingly, next morning he sailed for the Isle of Bourbon, which he reached with unexampled celerity; and finding the British fleet, which had there been assembled, had already sailed for the Mauritius.

* Southey's *Nelson* Vol. I. 137.

he instantly shaped his course for it, and joined it in sufficient time to co-operate with the well-planned attack of that important military post, and to render essential service towards its reduction. While the operations were carrying on by the troops on shore, he was entrusted with the blockade of the harbour of Port Louis, and landed a detachment of his seamen and marines, to assist in the more active duties of the service. In reward of his zeal and spirited conduct, on the surrender of the island, he was dispatched home with the intelligence of its fall, and entrusted with the charge of its colours. He reached Portsmouth in the month of February 1811 ; performing his voyage in the short space of nine weeks. Captain Rowley, in his letter to the Admiralty, did ample justice to Captain Parker's services ; and his judicious conduct, at such a critical moment, was likewise the theme of general approbation.

After a short refit of three weeks, at Portsmouth, Captain Parker was now, a second time, dispatched, in the following month, to cruise off St. Helena, to protect the East India trade, and to convoy home such ships of the season as were expected at the island about the period when he would be likely to reach it. Prior to his sailing he vacated his seat in Parliament. This service, in conjunction with the Hon. Captain Byng (now Viscount Torrington), he performed with his usual zeal and alacrity ; and, on the safe arrival of their convoy, in the month of August of the same year, the Court of Directors of the East India Company, with their accustomed munificence, voted a handsome present to these meritorious officers, in testimony of their approbation of the vigilant attention which they had shewn to the great interests confided to their care.

In the month of October following, Captain Parker was appointed to carry out the British ambassador, Lord William Bentinck, and his

suite to Sicily ; a service for which his urbanity of manners and liberal habits fitted him in a high degree. He had been employed in the year 1806 in a similar way, to bring home from Sicily, the Earl of Pembroke ; who, at that period, was the British ambassador at the Court of Sicily ; and he had, likewise, some years prior to this, been selected for the honorable distinction of bringing home to this country, from the Mediterranean, the Pope, at a moment when it was expected that his holiness would seek a refuge here from the outrages of the French ; and when, under the expectation of such an event, Captain Parker was instructed to take such cruizing ground as would facilitate his escape, and to afford him protection, by receiving him on board the *Melpomene*, in case his holiness should apply to him for such an asylum. On all these occasions the dignities of the service were honorably upheld by Captain Parker ; and the esteem and friendship of his distinguished guests became the gratifying return of his attentions to them.

Having landed Lord William Bentinck at Palermo, and subsequently convoyed a fleet of merchantmen into Malta, he proceeded, in obedience to his ulterior instructions, to join the Mediterranean fleet, under the command of Sir Edward Pellew ; where a fresh career of active service was awaiting his enterprising spirit.

On his way thither, early in the morning on the 8th of January 1812, in company with the *Redwing* brig, he discovered a large French frigate, about 15 miles a-head, between Cape Bon and Maritimo. At the close of the day, after the most anxious and persevering exertions on the part of the enemy to escape, and of the *Menelaus* to come up with her, each vessel crowding every sail, just after dark, the *Redwing* then in chase, between the *Menelaus* and the enemy, and apparently gaining ground on the latter, Captain Parker, fully persuaded she would

keep sight of, and lead him up, had left the deck, for the first time during the day, to take some refreshment; he sent for his purser, Mr. Moffatt, into his cabin, who found him seated on a pile of wads, covered with a flag, every article of furniture having been removed to clear for action; he asked him, with a tone of anxiety—"Do you think we shall come up with the chase?"—Mr. Moffatt replied, "Sir, I hope and trust we shall."—He exclaimed with emphasis, "God grant it! it will be the happiest moment of my life." He then delivered to him a few hasty lines, saying, "If any thing happens to me, give this to Mrs. Parker." Fate, however, denied to him this opportunity of distinction. During five successive days and nights, the chase was continued by the *Menelaus*, the whole of which time her crew were at their quarters, the men refusing to turn into their hammocks. On the night of the 13th she finally effected her escape, to the deep mortification of Captain Parker and his crew, owing to the light and variable winds which prevailed during the whole of the chase, as well as to the darkness of the night.

On the morning of the 14th it was their hard destiny to experience a similar disappointment. A French frigate, and large store-ship were descried; and, notwithstanding their great superiority, the *Menelaus* instantly chased and cleared for action, spreading every sail. The enemy disgracefully fled, and, favoured by the thick darkness which at that season prevailed, had also the good fortune to escape, under cover of its veil.

On the 26th of January Captain Parker arrived at Port Mahon; where he joined the commander-in-chief, Sir Edward Pellew, whose flag was then flying on board the *Caledonia*. Here he received the first accounts of the death of his venerable grandfather; and, succeeding to the title which devolved to him in consequence, now became Sir Peter Parker, Baronet.

On the 30th of January the *Ménelaus* was sent, with the *Curaçoa*, Captain Towers, to take the look-out station off Toulon; and during the period Sir Peter Parker was employed on this service, as well as while he remained attached to the Mediterranean fleet, he was greatly distinguished for his activity and success in harassing the enemy.

On the 29th of February, while proceeding to reconnoitre Villa Francha Genoa, the *Menelaus* chased a fine brig into the bay of Frejus, under the protection of three strong batteries; and, notwithstanding she brought-up with three anchors ahead, besides two hawsers, actually made fast to one of the batteries, and one under her bottom, Sir Peter was determined to endeavour to cut her out; and, accordingly, at eight in the evening, sent the boats, under the command of Lieutenant Mainwaring, to effect it; who succeeded in the most gallant style in bringing her off through a severe fire from the batteries (two of which flanked each other) and small arms from the beach, without loss; the caronnade in the launch having dismounted one of the largest guns in the nearest battery. She proved to be the *St. Joseph*, of 16 guns, from Genoa, and was laden with naval stores for the arsenal at Toulon.

On the 19th of April Sir Peter Parker read to his ship's company the vote of thanks from Parliament, for their services at the Mauritius.

On the 27th of the same month, while off Toulon, two French frigates, one of them of the largest class, were sent out in chase of the *Menelaus*; and, as Sir Peter Parker was to leeward, he immediately lay-to, to receive them, and cleared for action; his gallant spirit disdaining to consider them as his over-match. They came down under a press of

sail, but, to the great surprise of all on board the *Menelaus*, at the moment when they were nearly within gun-shot, daunted by the more intrepid spirit of their adversary, they ignominiously hauled their wind and ran into Toulon, under all sail, pursued by the *Menelaus*, which in vain endeavoured to bring them to action.

On the 1st of May, the *Menelaus* being the in-shore frigate off Toulon, observed a frigate and a brig (*la Pauline* and *l'Ecureuil*, from the Adriatic) in Hières bay, standing with all sail for the *Petite Passe*. On seeing the *Menelaus* boldly stand in, with a view to cut them off, they hauled their wind under the three top-sails; until the French fleet, of eleven sail of the line and six frigates, which came out for their protection, were so far advanced as to render them secure, when they immediately bore up with much promptitude. Sir Peter Parker then determined on making the effort, and he accordingly succeeded in bringing the *Pauline* and the *Ecureuil* to action, close under the batteries of Escambron; the *Menelaus* then having a union jack suspended from each stay. The *Menelaus* was cut up exceedingly in her rigging, principally by the heavy fire of the batteries, which shot her foremast through and through; and, though it was kept together for the moment, by fishing it with capstan bars, she was obliged to haul off. At that time the whole French fleet were standing out, and three sail of the line were nearly in her wake. From the crippled condition of the *Menelaus*, serious doubts were entertained respecting her safety; for she was completely cut off, and, in fact, surrounded by the enemy at the mouth of their own harbour, the wind blowing very fresh from the eastward.

The *Pauline* and brig, however, whose gaff had been shot away,

shewed no desire to continue the action ; for, instead of keeping engaged with the *Menelaus*, which would have ensured her capture, or, more probably, her destruction, they shamefully, with cries of “ *Vive l’Empereur*,” ran into Toulon.

From this desperate situation Sir Peter Parker extricated himself by a masterly manœuvre, which completely deceived the French admiral.

Sir Peter Parker’s object now was, to get to leeward of the enemy’s fleet, where Admiral Hallowell’s squadron was, hull down, consisting of the *Malta*, *Kent*, *Centaur*, and *Repulse*. In the crippled state of the *Menelaus*, however, this appeared impossible to effect. He resolved, therefore, to steer for the headmost ship of the enemy’s line, which, instead of keeping her wind, and laying the *Menelaus* alongside, which she had it in her power to do, steered parallel. This was a fortunate circumstance ; as on her firing her broadside, and putting her helm down, the helm of the *Menelaus* instantly put a-weather, and she thereby got to leeward of the enemy’s fleet, whither they were afraid to follow her, in consequence of the situation of Admiral Hallowell’s squadron, though, beating with a strong lee current, they could not have given the *Menelaus* any assistance.

The British fleet were seen only at intervals, to leeward, from the mast-head. It was now noon : the crew of the *Menelaus* turned to ; got up another fore-top-mast ; spliced and replaced her rigging (which had been shot to pieces by the frigate’s grape, that also hulled her), and repaired her sails ; and with top-gallant yards across, before sun-set, she reconnoitred over St. George’s Gap. Such was the incomparable activity

of her gallant officers and crew. The conduct of Sir Peter Parker, on this brilliant occasion, met the entire and cordial approbation, not only of the commander-in-chief, but excited the applause of the whole fleet. The masterly manœuvre, by which he so happily foiled the enemy, was universally extolled. The distinguished Admiral, third in command, is known to have expressed himself thus—"Captain Parker showed as much ability and judgment in working to windward of the enemy, as he had evinced gallantry and daring in pushing the first attack."

On the 18th of May another opportunity of brilliant service occurred. Sir Peter was employed, with a squadron under his command, consisting of the *Menelaus*, *Havannah*, and *Furieuse* frigates, and *Pelorus* brig, to reconnoitre the French force in Toulon. On that day the enemy's fleet, consisting of four three-deckers, seventeen two-deckers, eight frigates, and several smaller vessels of war, stood out of Toulon to manœuvre, as usual, the British fleet being upwards of thirty miles from the land; but a strong breeze springing up, they gave chase, apparently with the intention of intercepting the enemy on their return to port; which Sir Peter observing, he made sail to attack a frigate and a 74-gun ship, which were astern of their fleet, although there was only one frigate (the *Havannah*) near enough to assist him. Having got within half gun-shot of the 74, just at the harbour's mouth, he opened a heavy fire on her, from which she sustained considerable damage, having hulled her in several places, and cut up her rigging, so as to compel her to go into the inner harbour, where, next day, she was dismantled and docked. During this gallant effort to annoy the enemy, who were lying-to under the batteries of St. Margaretta, and almost within reach of those of Escambron, several of their ships opened

their fire on the *Menelaus*, which they continued for a quarter of an hour, and which she returned with equal spirit (exploding one of their forts by her fire)* to the astonishment and admiration of the British fleet, which, by this time, was well in sight; when the *Menelaus*, by signal, was ordered to cease firing. Although Sir Peter Parker kept the *Menelaus* within less than gun-shot of the enemy's fleet and batteries the whole time, she received no other damage than in her rigging and sails.

Shortly afterwards, twelve sail of the line and seven frigates, again came out of the harbour of Toulon. A line-of-battle ship and two frigates were sent in chase of Sir Peter's little squadron, the rest of the French fleet edging slowly down towards the chasing ships. Sir Peter's object was to lead them to leeward, but the *Pelorus* sailing badly, her fate now became doubtful, when he ordered his squadron to shorten sail and hoist their colours. The enemy, seeing his determination not to part with his Majesty's sloop, relinquished the chase, and the spirit and perseverance of Sir Peter thus preserved her from falling into the enemy's hands.

We have now to refer to an expedition, from which the most brilliant hopes were entertained of striking a formidable blow against the enemy, and wherein, although it failed, it was the good fortune of Sir Peter Parker to distinguish himself in a high degree. We allude to the attack, planned by Sir Edward Pellew, with his usual ability, on the 1st of June, against Ciotat, a town twenty miles from Toulon, and for which purpose he appointed a very respectable force, consisting of a large body of marines. This force was destined to land at two separate points, with a view of securing the batteries and approaches to

the town; or, if that should prove impracticable, of destroying the vessels lying in the Mole, consisting of a frigate and several smaller vessels of war, and a considerable number of merchantmen. The commander-in-chief, from the information he had received of its state of defence, considered that he had made every adequate provision for its success. Seven hundred marines, headed by excellent officers, were employed on this occasion; and Sir Peter Parker, on whose zeal and determined valour the admiral knew he could safely rely, was selected for the honorable post of danger, the *Menelaus* being appointed to cover the landing of one party of the marines, and then to take a position abreast of the Mole, with springs on her cables, to silence the battery at that place, and protect the marines during their attack, by diverting the fire of the enemy. Every preparation being made, the troops were embarked in the boats, and at eleven P.M. left the ships, round which they were ordered to assemble, accompanied by the officers appointed to that service, having previously been towed in shore by the *Menelaus* and the other ships selected for that purpose. With silent and anxious hope every eye now looked with confidence to a successful result. Towards day-break, however, to the extreme disappointment of the admiral, and great mortification of the whole fleet, the boats returned, without having effected a landing; and an expedition, planned with much care, and on which considerable expectation hinged, entirely failed, from causes with which we are unacquainted; but which, although they were attended with regret, we have no doubt, from the abilities and experience of the brave officers selected to conduct it, were unaccompanied with blame. Sir Peter Parker, on discovering this, immediately laid the *Menelaus* abreast of the town, and covered their retreat by a heavy cannonade, in the course of which he was exposed to a most galling fire from the enemy, from whence the

Menelaus sustained considerable damage in her rigging and hull. None felt this disappointment more deeply than Sir Peter: for no one was more confident in its being a practicable measure which, although foiled by unforeseen circumstances, had, nevertheless, originally been wisely planned by the commander-in-chief. Anxious, however, not entirely to lose the opportunity of rendering some service to his Majesty's arms on this occasion, and of acquiring that distinction at which he so ardently aspired, he obtained permission from the Admiral to make an attack himself on a powerful half-moon battery, which the enemy had nearly erected on Isle Verte, and which, if allowed to be finished, would secure the entrance to the bay. He, accordingly, landed his marines, in concert with those of the *Furieuse*, on the Isle Verte, and succeeded, under a heavy fire from the enemy, in totally destroying this powerful engine of annoyance to our fleet; and, to the equal surprise and approbation of the commander-in-chief, he effected this important service without the loss of a man. from the judicious manner in which the attack was planned, and the spirited way in which it was conducted. After having been some hours under the fire of the enemy, he was recalled, by signal from the admiral; who, in consequence of the severe damage the *Menelaus* had sustained in her hull, and sails, and rigging, sent her to Port Mahon to refit.

On the 26th of June the *Menelaus* was sent to Palermo. On the 26th of July the commander-in-chief sent her upon a service calculated to call into action all the abilities and well-known valour of her brave commander. She was ordered to cruize between the islands of Penza and Elba, along the coast of Italy, with a view of harassing the coasting trade of the enemy as much as possible, and of intercepting any naval stores destined for their fleet at Toulon.

On the 31st of July, while off Terracina, Sir Peter Parker discovered a large French xebec, under French colours, endeavouring to get under the heavy towers of that place for protection. Although the vessel had now run ashore between two towers, one mounting one, the other two long guns, Sir Peter was determined to endeavour, if he could not get the vessel off, to disable the guns on the towers. It being necessary to act with promptitude, as there was a strong town, not two miles distant, from whence troops could be sent to her relief, Sir Peter anchored within half-gun shot of her, and commenced a heavy fire, which was as briskly returned; when he sent a party of seamen in the boats, who having carried her, succeeded in floating and bringing off the vessel.

On the 11th of August another opportunity occurred when the undaunted heroism of Sir Peter Parker eminently signalized itself, by one of those successful acts of brilliant daring, so much within the spirit of the character of the great admiral under whom he served in the Victory, and of whose enthusiasm of mind, and contempt of difficulty and danger, he so warmly partook.

On that day, while cruising along the coast, he saw a large brig, a bombard, and several small vessels coming down; who, on seeing the Menelaus, hauled up for Port St. Stefano, in the bay of Orbitello. He then reconnoitred that port; and, although its strength was great, consisting of a battery of two guns, one of four guns, a tower with one, and a citadel of fourteen guns, yet Sir Peter determined, if possible, to cut them out, although they were anchored within musket-shot of the shore, and of the batteries. He then stood out to sea, that his preparations for the attack might not be noticed by the enemy, as

well as to lead them to suppose that, discouraged by the strength of the place, he had given up the intention of attack. At dark he again stood in for the bay, in the hope, by storming the town, of carrying the vessels. The service being of the most desperate nature, to which, in the event of failure, an imputation of rashness might, possibly, attach; and as it was a case wherein valour and example, on the part of their captain, became necessary to give confidence to his crew in the bold attempt he was about to make, he resolved on this occasion (as he also did on the one in which he has recently so heroically fallen) to head the attack himself, that his officers and men might alike see that he was not disposed to put them on any service of imminent peril which he was not equally ready to share with them. His preparations being made, and plan arranged, at eleven P.M. the boats left the ship, under his immediate direction; but a dead calm ensuing in shore, they were compelled to return, under a heavy fire from the citadel and batteries. Disappointed, but not discouraged, Sir Peter Parker determined to defer his attack until the ensuing Monday, in order to throw the garrison off its guard, and lull the inhabitants into a belief that, foiled by the failure of his first attempt, he had renounced all intention of a second. Accordingly, with that ardent zeal, which knew no difficulty, and that dauntless spirit which feared no danger, on the night of the 13th, he left the ship, with two gigs, two cutters, a launch, with an eighteen-pounder carronade, carrying 130 seamen and 40 marines, leaving the first lieutenant in charge of the ship. This gallant little band of British heroes had now to face the fire of the citadel and batteries, a regular force of 400 troops and the inhabitants of the town, who were under arms, to receive them. Sir Peter was to carry, if possible, the vessels in the harbour; Lieutenants Beynon and Wilcocks, with the marines, were to storm the batteries commanding it.

They now pushed rapidly for the shore, under a volley of fire; and these spirited and enterprising officers, both men of tried courage and conduct, on reaching it, leaped out of the boat with the marines, and led them immediately to the charge up the hill, driving three times the number of the enemy before them, into a four-gun battery, which they instantly stormed, putting all to the sword, and spiking the guns, consisting of three 42-pounders and one 18. The vessels were then boarded and carried by Sir Peter Parker, in the most dashing and brilliant style, though moored within half-pistol shot of the batteries, with six cables astern to the shore. Cries of "Wellington and Nelson," (the sign and countersign of the night) resounded through the harbour and on the hill, and proclaimed possession of the battery and vessels. The brig, laden with warlike stores, was brought off most gallantly, under a tremendous fire from the citadel, and the other vessels were scuttled and destroyed; and at break of day Sir Peter was received back into the *Menelaus*, with enthusiastic cheers from his brave crew.*

In his return he had a narrow escape. A grape shot from the batteries went through one side of his gig, in which he was sitting, close to his feet; and it was with great difficulty she was kept above water until she reached the ship.

The lustre of this brilliant action was, however, considerably dimmed in the estimation of Sir Peter, by the loss of one of his most promising midshipmen, Mr. Munro, who was killed by his side, and fell with that heroism of which his brave commander was giving him the

* Appendix, No. V.

animating example. His body was committed to the deep, with military honors; and such was the respect in which Sir Peter Parker held the early courage and rising talents of this lamented young officer, that, although in no shape related to him, yet, in token of his own grief at his premature fall, and that of his ship's company, by whom he was universally esteemed and regretted, he put himself into naval mourning for him, during six weeks. His other loss was comparatively trifling, though ever heavy when a British sailor falls—it amounted to five, only, killed and wounded.

Following up these successes, on the 3d of September, at the mouth of the river Mignone, off Civita Vecchia, perceiving a large letter of marque at anchor, pierced for 14 guns, and protected by two strong batteries, as soon as it was dark, he sent in two boats, the crews of which succeeded in boarding and bringing her off, under a very galling fire. The following day he drove three French sloops of war into port Hercule, a place strongly fortified; and, on the 5th, at the mouth of the lake of Orbitello, he again cut out, in the most gallant and masterly style, under a very heavy fire, a large French ship, strongly defended by a tower, having previously anchored his ship under the fire of the latter, on which occasion he was struck by a splinter on the breast, the enemy's shot having pierced three of his boats.

The period to which this cruize was limited being now expired, Sir Peter Parker, on the 13th of September, was recalled by the commander-in-chief, and again stationed as the look-out frigate off Toulon; a service for which his nautical skill and active intrepid spirit eminently fitted him. Here his vigilance again became conspicuous; and the enemy, whose fleet he repeatedly reconnoitred in the most

daring manner, were incessantly on the watch to capture him, if possible.

On the morning of the 6th of October, a circumstance occurred, which, as it serves to shew the professional skill and judgment of Sir Peter Parker in all situations of danger, ought not to be passed over in silence. The wind had been high the preceding night, and in the morning it became baffling; and, as the squalls returned occasionally with great violence, attended with a heavy swell and strong current, which had already embayed the *Menelaus*, and was fast setting her on to the rocks of Cape L'Aigle, she could only beat off under storm stay-sails, two of which split while in the act of wearing. Her situation now became truly alarming, as she had been twice taken aback while endeavouring to wear the ship's head off shore, and was now very fast approaching the rocks. At length, through the cool perseverance and masterly skill of Sir Peter, after eight hours of hard and most anxious exertions, and all the while exposed to the raking fire of two half-moon batteries, she succeeded in clearing Cape L'Aigle, contrary to the expectations of the master and all on board, as well as of the whole of our fleet, who were in sight, but unable to render the *Menelaus* any assistance.

In the month of November, the *Menelaus* was employed on a cruise along the coast of Catalonia; where she occasionally harassed the enemy, capturing or driving on shore his smaller vessels, and dispersing his skirmishing parties, occupied in plundering the miserable inhabitants of the coast.

In the month of December, after having thus distinguished himself by much of active service, the British fleet, being in Port Mahon for the

winter, the *Menelaus* was ordered to Malta to bring home a rich-convey, with which she arrived safe at Portsmouth in the month of May 1819.

The American war had now broken out; and Commodore Rogers, in the *President* frigate (a ship, in her complement, construction, and general equipment, little inferior to a British 74, and since captured off the American coast, with such distinguished honor to Captain Hope and his brave crew, in the *Endymion* frigate, a vessel of far inferior strength, after a hard fought action), encouraged by some early naval successes on the part of America, put to sea to cruize against our trade.

As infinite mischief was likely to be the consequence of this daring attempt to annoy our commerce, the Honourable Captain Paget, in the *Superb*, and Sir Peter Parker in the *Menelaus* (under the orders of the former), with the fly brig, *Sir William Parker*, were dispatched by the Admiralty, in the month of July of the same year, to cruize in pursuit of him. On sailing, Sir Peter Parker turned all hands up, and read to them the official letter from Captain Brooke, of the *Shannon* frigate, detailing the capture of the *Chesapeake*. He then said to them—"My good fellows, it is my determination never to strike the glorious British colours to the American flag." This speech was received with enthusiastic cheers from the crew; and three copies of the letter were likewise fixed up in the most conspicuous part of the ship, for general perusal.

This cruize lasted nearly five months, in the latitudes most likely to answer the two-fold end of protecting our trade and of falling in with the enemy; during which period, to the joint mortification of these gallant officers, they traversed above 5000 leagues, without meeting with the *President*, or any other American vessel.

Such was the zeal and activity evinced by Sir Peter Parker throughout this long and anxious cruize, and so highly did Captain Paget admire the excellent discipline, style of sailing, and admirable condition of his consort in all respects, which he felt a pride, while under his command, of holding up to our fleets as a model of what was most perfect in the service, that, on his return to port, in the month of December following, he presented Sir Peter Parker with an elegant sword, in token of the high sense he entertained of his professional merits and gallant conduct on every occasion, and of his unremitting attention to the health and comfort of his crew; having returned to port, after this long cruize, without losing one man or having a single sailor on his sick list. And it is not the least part of the distinction acquired by this meritorious officer, during the many arduous years he devoted to the service of his country, that he should have excited the approbation and gained the friendship of so excellent a judge of professional merit, and so distinguished an officer as Captain Paget, who, on receiving the intelligence of Sir Peter Parker's death, bent over his fall with an affliction alike honorable to both.

The *Menelaus* returned to Plymouth early in December; and, a few days afterwards, she sailed again to join the British fleet under Lord Keith, off Brest; from whence she was ordered on a cruize between Brest and L'Orient.

On the 17th of January 1814, in a hard gale of wind, she fell in with a French vessel of war of 18 guns. After a chase of eleven hours the latter rashly persisting in carrying a press of sail, unfortunately upset, close under the bows of the *Menelaus*; when the *Menelaus*, being so very near her, and having all sail set before the wind, which could not

instantly be shortened, went over her bottom. Sir Peter deeply felt the misfortune of the enemy, but the accident was too instantaneous, and the weather too rough to admit of the possibility of affording them any assistance. It subsequently appeared that she proved to be the L'Ecureuil privateer, a fast-sailing vessel, which had greatly annoyed our trade. Two hundred men unfortunately went down in her.

On the 14th of February Sir Peter Parker re-captured the St. Jean de Baptiste, a Spanish galleon, of 20 guns, freighted with treasure and merchandise, from Lima, bound to Cadiz, taken by two French frigates, off Madeira; and, on the 21st of the same month he brought her safe into Plymouth; from whence he sailed again the following day. She was erroneously reported to be the richest prize taken during the war, and to be worth three millions sterling. Her freight, however, did not amount to 200,000*l.* and the captors became entitled only to salvage thereon.

On the 22d of March 1814, at six P.M. the Menelaus discovered two French frigates ahead, of the largest class, and immediately made all sail in chase of them. As it was blowing a hard gale, and the sea running high, she was unable to bring them to action. They bore up close together, and made all possible sail from the Menelaus, steering for Brest into which port she drove them, after having fired several broadsides at both, without their returning a gun. The enemy, by telegraphic signal, immediately sent out an 80-gun ship after the Menelaus, but, in rounding the point, she struck upon a rock, and the weather blowing hard, she soon went to pieces. The Menelaus was in great danger herself, being very near the rocks, and the gale and sea setting her towards a lee shore; but, owing to the superior seamanship,

and intrepidity, and coolness of her brave captain and crew, she was enabled, by day-light, to get clear of the bay. For his conduct on this occasion Sir Peter Parker received the thanks of the Admiralty. The *Menelaus* had scarcely cleared the bay when, on the following day, the cheering cry from the mast-head, of a large ship in sight, greeted the ears of her disappointed crew. Every sail was stretched in pursuit of her, and she was found to be a French frigate (the *Atalante*), under a press of sail, steering for Brest. Every heart now beat high. Finding the *Menelaus* had cut her off from that port, she bore up for the Penmarks, as did likewise the *Menelaus*. The superior sailing of the *Menelaus* enabled her to distinguish the enemy's hull before four P.M. when she rounded the Penmarks (a long chain of rocks); but the *Menelaus* was not so fortunate, as the wind had much abated and shifted against her, so that at the close of day she lost sight of the *Atalante*. Conceiving the latter would push for L'Orient, the *Menelaus* used every exertion to be off that port before morning, in the hope of intercepting her. On this occasion Sir Peter Parker displayed that seamanship and professional skill, which it had been the study of his life to acquire, and which, at his age, none ever possessed in a more eminent degree. While proceeding through the intricate and dangerous passage between the Isle of Croa and the main, in order to reconnoitre the port of L'Orient, to ascertain if she had taken shelter there, the master of the *Menelaus* gave up the charge of the ship, stating that, as he had never been through this passage before, he could not hold himself responsible for any accident which might occur. On this, Sir Peter, fearlessly laying his chart upon a gun, directed the helmsman the courses to steer; and, although unacquainted with the passage, carried her safe through, having met with no other damage than a few shot cutting her sails and rigging. At four P.M. the

Menelaus reconnoitred the harbour of L'Orient, and not finding the Atalante there, she made sail for the Glenan Isles, near which, on the 25th, she found her at anchor in the bay. Here, again, as the navigation was intricate, Sir Peter took the responsibility on himself of piloting her in; and, although he had never been there before, yet he immediately stood in, as far as propriety and the safety of the ship would allow, and piloted her to an anchorage within range of the batteries. To the mortification and deep disappointment of her gallant crew, they found the Atalante moored within the rocks of Concarneau, the passage to which is very dangerous, even under the direction of the most expert pilot, nor is the anchorage wide enough to admit of two ships abreast. The Menelaus anchored for the night about a mile distant from her. At day-light a heavy fire of shells, round and grape shot, was opened on her from the batteries which compelled her to move without their range. Galled by the escape of an enemy who appeared so nearly within his reach, Sir Peter sent a flag of truce on shore, with the following challenge to her captain:—

“ His Britannic Majesty's Ship Menelaus, at Anchor
before Concarneau, 26th March 1814.

“ SIR,

“ The honor of the French nation requires that the fine frigate you command should not lay screened by the rocks and shoals which at present surround it, in the presence of a ship of equal force.

“ I, therefore, hope you will see with me the propriety of immediately coming out and bringing us to action, and I promise you that no English man-of-war, of any description, shall interfere in the contest.

“ As I am persuaded I am addressing an officer of the strictest honor,

I shall feel perfectly satisfied you will readily accord with my ideas on this occasion.

“ With every sentiment of consideration and respect,

“ I have the honor to be, Sir,

“ Your most obedient and very humble Servant,

“ PETER PARKER, BART.

“ Captain of His Majesty's Ship Menelaus.

“ Petite Rade de Concarneau, le 26 Mars 1814.

“ MONSIEUR,

“ La fregate L'Atalante, que je commande, ne peut sortir d'un port Français que par un ordre de mes chefs ; je le reclamerai, mais je ne peux pas assurer que je l'obtiendrai.

“ Si l'on l'accorde, j'aurai le plaisir de vous voir aussitôt que possible.

“ J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec consideration et respect,

“ Votre très humble et très obeissant Serviteur,

“ MALLET,

“ Capitaine de Fregate, Chevalier
en la Legion d'Honneur.”*

“ A Mr. le Baronet PETER PARKER.”

* (TRANSLATION.)

“ Sir,

“ The Atalante frigate, which I command, cannot leave a French port without an order from the superior authorities. I shall apply for one, but I cannot promise that it will be granted; if it should be, I shall have the pleasure of meeting you as early as possible.

“ I have the honor to be, with consideration and respect,

“ Your very obedient humble Servant,

“ MALLET,

“ Captain of Frigate and Chevalier of
the Legion of Honor.”

Permission was not granted, and, under a disappointment that mortified equally Sir Peter Parker and his whole crew, the *Menelaus* was obliged again to put to sea. So strongly did the disappointment occasioned by this circumstance prey upon the sensitive mind of Sir Peter Parker, that, on the night before he fell, at the distance of some months from the period when it occurred, in making his will, he alludes to it in a manner as honorable to his heart, as to the professional merits of one of his young midshipmen, who seemed, in a more prominent degree to feel for and sympathize with him, under a disappointment which affected equally his health and spirits; at the close of life it was uppermost in his thoughts. This instrument concludes by saying,—“The only thing, then, I leave away from my family, is the sword given me by my friend, Captain Paget, which I give to my friend, Mr. Henry Augustus Finucane, (Midshipman of *Menelaus*) as a mark of my esteem, and particularly for the feelings he shewed towards me in the state of my anxious disappointment when chasing the French frigates into Brest, on the 22d March, 1814.”

Shortly after this, hearing of the cessation of hostilities between France and Great Britain, the *Menelaus* made sail for Plymouth; where she arrived in the month of April 1814.

It was now the intention of Sir Peter Parker, after fifteen years of gallant and continual hard service, during the two wars growing out of the French Revolution, to have retired for a while into the bosom of his family; and he was on the eve of resigning his command of the *Menelaus*, when he received an order to proceed to Bourdeaux, to join the fleet under Admiral Malcolm, appointed to convey the troops

from thence, destined to act on the American shores. It was highly creditable to the officers and crew of the *Menelaus*, on returning to port, that she was almost the only frigate at Plymouth that was retained in commission, and not dismantled after the peace with France. It was no longer his family, now, that engaged his attention, it was his duty only that was in his view. Warmly as he was devoted to them, the prevailing feeling of his breast was obedience to his country's call. *Cari liberi, propinqui, familiares; sed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa est.*—Cic.

He, therefore, sailed from Plymouth early in the month of May; and reaching Bourdeaux a few days afterwards, he left the latter place, in company with Admiral Malcolm, and arrived at Bermuda in the following month. From this island he was sent to co-operate with the naval and land forces in the Chesapeake against the enemy. On his arrival in that river, as appears by the *London Gazette* of the 27th of September 1814, he was detached, with two small vessels, by the commander-in-chief on the American station, Vice-admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, off the entrance of the Potomac, to blockade the harbour of Baltimore, and “make a diversion in that quarter,” by harassing the enemy as much as possible. On assuming the station, Sir Peter Parker was early informed that there was a pressing requisition from the States, drawing off one man out of every five on the eastern side of the bay, the population of which is exceedingly numerous. To prevent, if possible, any reinforcement to an army already opposing ours, and trebling it in amount, was clearly a matter of great importance to the service. How actively he discharged this important trust, is attested in the vice-admiral's dispatch, contained in this *Gazette*, wherein he is represented,

in the course of the few days it lasted, to have “ frequently dislodged small bodies of the enemy, by landing parties of seamen and marines, and destroying various stores.” And it likewise appears, by a letter from himself, under date the 23d of August 1814, inserted also in the London Gazette, that he had, in one of these attacks, in the face of a superior force, destroyed a depot of stores to “ a great amount,” and considerably annoyed the enemy. Such was his vigilance during the short period of less than a month that he continued stationed there, that he not only prevented a single boat crossing the bay, but took and destroyed ten sail of vessels, in the face, also, of a superior force. While chasing, the *Menelaus* was obliged to anchor in a spot so situated, from shoals, that on both sides her stern was swinging within pistol shot of the shore, and from whence she could not move without a leading wind, the breeze at this time very fresh and directly against her. The enemy had in sight two sloops of war and eleven of the largest class of gun-boats, all waiting for the first favourable moment to attack her. They had also five pieces of artillery on the other side of a wood, not half a mile from the beach, so planted as to command the *Menelaus*, without her fire being able to reach them. In this situation, had her cable been cut by a random shot, she must inevitably have grounded close to the beach, in the immediate presence of 700 soldiers. The sloops of war and gun-boats, in two hours, would have been enabled to choose any position against the *Menelaus*. Thus circumstanced Sir Peter Parker instantly decided on attacking them, under cover of the night, instead of waiting the attempt premeditated against the *Menelaus*. This spirited resolution had its desired effect, and certainly was, eventually, the means of saving his Majesty’s ship from the hazard of a most unequal contest with so superior a force. The effect was, the *Menelaus* was suffered

to wait a favourable change in the weather, without the smallest molestation.

In the Admiralty bulletin, of the 27th September 1814, notifying the capture of Washington, these active exertions of Sir Peter Parker, to distress the enemy, and effect a diversion in favor of our army on the side of Baltimore, are stated by government, in a manner highly honorable to his memory, “to have had the desired effect,” and to have been distinguished by “a most gallant attack on a camp of the enemy on shore.”*

The period was now arrived when the bright career of this brave officer was to terminate, and his country for ever to be deprived of his valuable services. He had heard of the fall of Washington, and he had received intelligence, as we have stated, of a body of militia being encamped behind a wood near the beach, with a view of surprising any party he might land, of opening their artillery against his ship, and of endeavouring, under cover of their gun-boats, to effect their great object, by crossing the bay to the relief of Baltimore, if he could be found off his guard. Anxious to defeat their purpose, to drive them from a position which threatened the safety of the *Menelaus*, to procure intelligence for his admiral (an object, likewise, of much importance) and to produce on the enemy an impression favourable to the ulterior operations of our army and fleet, at that moment advancing against Baltimore, he determined, if possible, by a night attack, to surprise them, and storm their camp. As the service was of the most desperate

* Appendix No. VI.

nature, he resolved, as in the case of his intrepid and successful attack on St. Stefano, to head it himself. Accordingly, on the night of the 30th of August 1814, at eleven o'clock, his preparations being all ready, he landed a body of seamen, who had been previously well trained to the use of small arms, and a party of marines, not exceeding, altogether, one hundred and forty men, formed into two divisions, headed by Lieutenants Crease and Pearce, and the whole commanded by himself. Having taken the look-out piquet, and one or two dragoons, they advanced in close column, with the deepest silence, for the enemy's camp, who, they found, had shifted his position. After a march of four miles, they found him drawn up on a plain, surrounded by woods, with his camp in the rear, and his strength (as was subsequently found by a flag of truce) consisting of five hundred militia, a troop of horse, and five pieces of artillery. He was formed in line and perfectly ready. Not a moment was now to be lost. Undaunted by this apparently overwhelming superiority of force, Sir Peter Parker determined upon an immediate attack. By a smart fire and instant charge, the enemy was driven from his position, completely routed, and compelled to a rapid retreat behind his artillery, where he again made a stand; one of his guns was captured, but again abandoned. The attack was instantly renewed with the same desperate gallantry and (as Lieutenant Crease, whose brave and meritorious conduct was equally conspicuous, states, in his official letter to Sir Alexander Cochrane, as published in the London Gazette, on the 27th of September last)—“It was at this time, while animating his men in the most heroic manner, that Sir Peter Parker received his mortal wound, which obliged him to quit the field, and he expired in a few minutes.”*

* See Appendix, No. VII.

The ball by which he fell entered his right thigh and cut the main artery. On receiving his mortal wound, he smiled and said—"They have hit me, Pearce, at last, but it is nothing; push on, my brave fellows, and follow me!" Cheering his men with such undaunted heroism of spirit, that even his dying accents may be said to have been strains of triumph.—The latter as enthusiastically returned his cheer. He advanced at their head a few paces further, when, staggering under the rapid flow of blood from his wound, he grew weak—fell into the arms of his second lieutenant, Mr. Pearce—and faintly desiring him to sound the bugle, to collect the men, and leave him on the field, he finally surrendered, without a sigh or a pang, his brave spirit to the mercy of heaven. His men collected around his body, and swore never to deliver it up to the enemy but with their lives. At this moment some gallant fellows bled and died around him.

The conflict was now among these intrepid champions of their country's cause, who should bear off from the enemy the cherished remains of their captain. At the head of these was Lieutenant Pearce, whose bravery during the action had so nobly seconded Sir Peter Parker; who, aware of the distinguished abilities and merit of this excellent and rising young officer, had applied to the Admiralty to have him appointed to the *Menelaus* prior to her leaving England. On the retreat of the enemy, Lieutenant Pearce placed him on the shoulders of his men; who relieving each other by turns, thus bore off to the shore (a distance of five miles) the body of their fallen and beloved commander.

One of these, William Porrell, seaman, evinced on this occasion a personal bravery, and attachment to his captain that would have done

credit to any mind. This man was near Sir Peter when he received the fatal wound, and immediately ran to his assistance, and supported him in his arms until further help was procured. The men who bore him off were changed, occasionally, but Porrell refused to quit the body a moment, and, unrelieved, sustained his portion of the weight to the shore. When it was suggested by some present, that the enemy might rally and cut off their retreat, he exclaimed—"No d——d Yankee shall lay a hand on the body of my captain while I have life or strength to defend it."

The intrepid spirit and unconquerable mind of another British sailor, named James Perring, equally merits here the meed of admiration. He was not above 24 years of age. Early in the action he had been mortally wounded; under circumstances of peculiar suffering, and calling out to his companions to draw him aside and advance, he swore he would never become the prisoner of a Yankee. He, subsequently, crawled to a tree, against which, in great agony, he seated himself, with his cutlass in one hand and his pistol in the other. At day-light the Americans, finding the British had retreated, returned to the field of battle, for the humane purpose of collecting the wounded. They found Perring in this position, life ebbing fast away. They summoned him to surrender. He answered, no American should ever take him alive. They assured him they only came to carry him off to the hospital. He still persevered in refusing to receive succours from them. He was told, if he refused giving up his arms, they must fire on him. Collecting his remaining strength, he exclaimed—"Fire away, and be d——d! No Yankee shall ever take me alive; you will only shorten an hour's misery!" The Americans respected the heroism of this brave young man, and left him, unmolested, to expire on the field.

Lieutenant Pearce, in announcing to Sir Peter Parker's family the afflicting intelligence of his heroic death, says—"We bore him from the field with a handful of gallant fellows, before a force four times superior; and it was the intention of every man to have perished, rather than give up the body of their dear brave captain. He has been embalmed and preserved, with an intent of sending him to England, as a token of their respect and regard for so dear a friend."

Thus fell the gallant Parker! truly styled by Mr. Whitbread, in a short but eloquent panegyric on his memory, on the 9th of November 1814 (amidst the plaudits of the House of Commons), "A Parker whom all must admire—cheering and animating his men to the advance, even after a mortal wound had arrested the ardent spirit of his heroism."* At the early age of twenty-eight years he met his glorious fate; fifteen of these had been actively passed in the service of his country. As few young men had ever more in their possession to render life desirable, so none ever parted with it more disinterestedly, or more honorably, or left behind them a more unstained reputation. He was a daring and finished seaman, as well as a most skilful and experienced naval officer, alike conversant with the theory and practice of naval tactics; full of resource in the hour of difficulty or danger, as he evinced on many trying occasions. It was in those difficult and perilous situations, to which officers of his profession are continually and more peculiarly exposed, that the mind of Sir Peter Parker rose to the crisis, and displayed that coolness of conduct, superiority of judgment, and fertility of resource, for which he was so greatly distinguished: and to which he was indebted for the confidence and exertions he inspired in those around him,

* Parliamentary Debates.

whenever immediate difficulty or danger aroused the exercise of these commanding qualities. Accomplished as he was in every branch of his profession, in him, it may be truly said, the public has lost a most promising young officer, full of talent, zeal, and heroism of character; "Whose only fault, if it may be deemed so, was an excess of gallantry, enterprise, and devotion to the service;"* and who, if it had pleased divine Providence to have prolonged his valuable life, was eminently fitted to have increased the naval glories of his country, and, as he rose in his profession, to have emblazoned the annals of her fame. If in the mode of his death, he has left any thing to regret, it is, that, from the more peculiar nature of the American war, which required the services of naval captains frequently on shore as well as at sea, he did not fall on that more appropriate element on which he had already acquired such merited distinction. But the dispensations of heaven are for ever just, and the duties of the hero forbid him to choose the moment or the manner of his death. To die for our country is the part of the patriot, and in what way the sacrifice is made, is indifferent to him, if the offering be grateful to his fellow citizens. No man ever felt more powerfully the influence of this noble sentiment than Sir Peter Parker; whose endowments of mind fashioned him as much to admire its beauty, as to act from its impulse; it was imperative on his heart, which was stamped with the noblest allegiance and affection for his country. This duty he has greatly performed, sacrificing to it all the ties which give a charm and value to human existence, and, finally, that existence itself. Already a grave of glory is his, and the tears of his friends and the regrets of his country have enshrined his fall. Yes, gallant and heroic spirit! high shalt thou stand in the list of those virtuous

* Colonel Brooke's character of General Ross. London Gazette, October 17. 1814.

and intrepid youthful heroes, who, with every thing to render life desirable, shrink not from its sacrifice, when it can be offered up on the altar of glory, in the sacred cause of their king and country. Time shall surround thy services with unceasing respect; and the recording annals of a grateful country shall embalm thy memory with perpetual fame!

His body was conveyed on board the *Menelaus*, where universal sorrow pervaded every breast. No officer ever fell more generally regretted or beloved than Sir Peter Parker. He was the idol of his crew, who embalmed and preserved his remains; and, as a last token of their affection and respect for his memory, his officers and men unanimously petitioned Admiral Sir George Cockburn for leave to bring home his body to England; nor could the crew be persuaded to give it up, for the purpose of interment at Bermuda, on an order from Admiral Cockburn, until the admiral went on board the *Menelaus* himself, and reconciled them to the surrender of it, by assuring them that he would convey it there himself, and give to their beloved commander a funeral worthy of the distinguished manner in which he fell.

This promise Admiral Cockburn religiously performed; and we have extracted, from the papers of the day, the following account of the handsome manner in which it was acquitted—

“Bermuda, October 14, 1814.

“This day the body of the brave Sir Peter Parker, which had been previously embalmed and conveyed to this island in his Majesty’s ship

Hebrus, Captain Palmer, was brought on shore and buried. Every honor and every testimony of respect due to the rank and to the heroism of this gallant and lamented young officer, was paid to his remains. The whole garrison, with a detachment of seamen and marines from the fleet and ships in the harbour, the governor, the general, the admiral, and the principal inhabitants, attended the mournful ceremony, and evinced, by the universal sorrow which pervaded every breast, the high estimation in which this true naval hero was held by that profession, of which he was so distinguished an ornament."

Since that period an additional mark of respect has recently been shewn to his memory in a way of all others the most honorable to his fame, and the most gratifying to the heart of a naval officer, whose best glory is, to command the affections of those whose obedience to his authority it is his duty to exact.

On the arrival of the *Menelaus* at Spithead, in the month of May last, the first act of the officers and crew was to testify their grief at the loss of their late commander. Finding that his remains (according to his own desire, expressed before he fell,) had been brought home in the *Hebrus*, from Bermuda, to be deposited with those of his ancestors, in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster,* the whole ship's company, officers and men, determined on erecting a monument to his memory, to record their grief at his fall—their gratitude for his kindness to them—and their admiration of his heroic conduct on every occasion, when, by exertion or example, he could animate them to carry high the honor

* Appendix, No. VIII.

of their profession and country. A liberal sum was instantly subscribed, and the chisel of the sculptor is already giving life to a testimonial so honorable to both.*

The conduct of the crew of the *Menelaus*, in this instance, may not be without its moral to the junior part of the service. It teaches, that the heart of the sailor is rightly formed—that the road to his affections is through his respect—that equality of conduct, and equanimity of temper, are certain ways to the latter—that kind usage is not incompatible with strict discipline—and that, where both are judiciously blended, the comfort and happiness of a crew are promoted, and the attachment of the seamen to their officers, in an equal proportion, is secured.

But it was not in his profession alone that Sir Peter Parker was deservedly admired; in private life he was universally esteemed. The circle of his friends was extensive, and throughout the navy he was generally known. He possessed, in a high degree, all the social qualities formed to please, and his heart was moulded to the best affections. To a fine figure, and handsome countenance, he united manners calculated both to captivate and command. Formed equally for the happiness and virtues of domestic life, he married, in the year 1809, Marianne, second daughter of Sir George Dallas, Bart. by whom he had issue three sons; Peter, Charles, and George; who are left to emulate hereafter (it is hoped with happier results, if spared by Providence!) his bright example; and animated by the lesson of his instructive life, to

seek the same paths of loyalty and honor which their gallant father so steadily pursued.

His deeply afflicted young widow has to mourn in him the loss of a husband, whose devotion to her, and to his children, had justly rendered him the idol of her heart. His last moments were divided between tenderness towards her and them, and duty to his country. On quitting his ship he left the following affecting letter to her, so truly characteristic of the brave and generous heart which he was known to possess:—

“ H.M.S. Menelaus, August 30th, 1814.

“ MY DARLING MARIANNE,

“ I am just going on desperate service, and entirely depend upon valour and example for its successful issue. If any thing befalls me, I have made a sort of will. My country will be good to you and our adored children. God Almighty bless and protect you all!—

“ Adieu, most beloved Marianne, Adieu,

“ PETER PARKER.”

“ P.S. I am in high health and spirits.”

Such were the valedictory lines of this gallant officer to his too unfortunate widow; whose griefs hereafter, when time and religion shall have blunted their force, will be further calmed, not merely by the consolatory reflection that he died gallantly fighting the cause of his king and country, but by the more glorious hope and devout confidence that he has received from the mercies of an approving heaven, the eternal reward of a life so virtuously spent and so nobly resigned.

We cannot close this sketch of the short but active naval career of Sir Peter Parker without noticing those excellent qualities of his heart which gave a lustre and a finish to his professional character. To the many who knew him and admired him, we may say, that no one possessed a heart more alive to the warmest sympathies of friendship, or more replete with general tenderness. It was not a heart that was open to friendship alone, that beat at the call of kindred rank or station; it embraced the wider range of human suffering, and was ever alive to the appeal, where misery could be soothed, where affliction could be comforted, or where struggling poverty could be relieved and encouraged. The charities of his religion he practised in their best form, without ostentation, and with silent benevolence.

When the death of a sailor, who was shot while cutting out a French vessel from under the towers of Terracina, was announced to him, after lamenting the loss of so good a seaman, he inquired if he was a married man, and finding he had left a wife in very poor circumstances, he immediately remitted 30*l.* to the widow from his private purse. And, on all similar occasions where deserving objects presented themselves to his sympathy, he was active in relieving their misery. In fact, he entered into the feelings and interests of those under his command, with a zeal and warmth that could not fail to attach to him every one serving under his authority. He never considered whether in promoting their views, or administering to their comfort, he expended either his interest or his money; but turning from selfish calculations he yielded to the impulse of his heart, and often successfully exerted both, to administer to the happiness of others.

Notwithstanding his attachment to his crew, and the affection with

which it was repaid, it was the fate of Sir Peter Parker, at one period of his life (like that of many other gallant officers), to have had it imputed to him by envy and calumny, that the discipline of his ship was more severe than was necessary for the purposes of just subordination. But no charge was ever more unfounded or triumphantly refuted. He was, it is true, on principle, a rigid disciplinarian; but, though strict in his discipline, he was just in his conduct. Wherever such a notion prevailed, it was owing to the ignorance of the real state of such cases as momentarily might have given birth to it. When Sir Peter Parker first joined the *Menelaus*, more than one third of her crew consisted of men who scarcely knew what a ship was, who were exceedingly dirty and slovenly, indolent in the extreme, and some of them persons of desperate characters, capable of much enormity of conduct; another third consisted of men who had been very little at sea, and consequently had much to learn. The number who could be called real able seamen was, therefore, very small. Every person who knows the necessity of good discipline and cleanliness in a man of war, must allow that Sir Peter had no easy task to perform in getting his ship and crew into such superior order as he eventually did. In the early stage of his command of her, having such a crew to begin with, punishment could not frequently be avoided; but, years before his death they became a most orderly and excellent crew, and the punishments in the *Menelaus* were extremely rare, and were never inflicted but with a strain on the feelings of Sir Peter Parker; to which all his officers and crew alike bear witness.* And, we believe we may venture to assert, generally (whatever few instances there may be to the

* Appendix, No. X.

contrary), that, considering the nature of the power with which the officers of his Majesty's navy are unavoidably intrusted, no body of men are more distinguished for humane and considerate feelings towards those dependant on their authority. If there is a class more dear to the state than another, it must be that valuable and hardy race into whose hands are committed the defence of its shores, and whose valour is the bulwark of its independence. Every tie of interest—every motive of policy—every sentiment of humanity—call upon it to see that no severity at variance with justice and humanity, is exercised towards them by their officers, while maintaining that necessary discipline and subordination on which the safety of all so essentially depends in a ship. While, therefore, we should hold in horror the abuse of this authority, by the exercise of any unjustifiable severity, equally ought we to be on our guard against those exaggerated statements of oppression, flowing sometimes from benevolent credulity, but oftener from individual malice, which seek to spread an opinion that such abuses of power are frequent in the navy, and which resting on no just foundation, and repelled by the character of the service at large, tend only, by weakening the respect of the sailors for their officers, to sap the discipline of his Majesty's fleets, and thereby cripple the best arm of the country. Parliamentary discussions of this sort, when not supported by adequate cases, endanger the foundations of our maritime strength, and strike, as we have already observed by their mischievous consequences, at the pillars of our national glory.

They who had the best opportunities of observing the conduct and career of Sir Peter Parker, can well attest, that if there was a feature more prominent than another in his naval character, it was not only an active and generous attention to the welfare of those under his

command, but it likewise extended itself to his profession generally, wherever he could display the benevolence of his heart.

After the action of the 11th of August 1812, in the port of St. Stephano, when the body of Mr. Monro was brought on board it was generally thought that life was not wholly extinct. Sir Peter, whose anxiety was in this instance awakened, equally by his friendship and humanity, immediately had it brought into his cabin and put into his own cot, clinging with eagerness to the slight hope held out to him. But when these hopes proved delusive, and every means which had been used to restore animation without effect, his grief was excessive, nor was he even seen to smile for many weeks after, putting himself into deep mourning, out of his respect for the virtues, and his affection for the memory of the deceased.

His attention to the sick and wounded was very great, always sending them fresh meat from his own table, before he took any himself, and daily visiting them, to satisfy himself personally of their health and wants; and whenever any of his midshipmen, to whom he was not less a father than a brother, were attacked with any sickness, however slight, he immediately had them brought into his cabin, where they remained invariably till their health was restored. The following instance in particular will serve to shew his affection for his crew, and tender anxiety for the ease and comfort of his wounded men. The day after the action in Port Mejan, a gale of wind coming on made the ship roll very uneasy, and consequently gave additional pain to the men who were unfortunately wounded in that affair. To avoid this Sir Peter made sail for the mouth of the Rhone, where he anchored, in hopes of riding

out the gale and keeping the ship more steady; but, unfortunately, the gale increased so much in the night, that he was obliged to veer out all the cables he had on board; after which, notwithstanding all his endeavours, the *Menelaus* drifted out to sea, when he was obliged to cut her cables and run for Mahon. Nor were these acts of kindness unnoticed by the men, who took every opportunity of shewing their sense of them, and of evincing their gratitude. How warm this feeling towards their captain was, may be gathered from the following circumstance:—When cruising off Toulon, it was erroneously rumoured that their captain was going to be exchanged for another; the ship's company, unknown to him, instantly wrote a letter to the commander-in-chief,* requesting that Sir Peter Parker might not be removed from the *Menelaus*; or, if such a step was necessary, that they might go with him wherever he went; and one of the seamen, who was writing a song relative to their late exploits, alluding to the above circumstance, concluded it with this verse:—

“ For Sir Edward Pellew,
 (We all know its true)
 Now wishes to change our commander,
 Tho' ship's company replied,
 They'd fight till they died,
 Commanded by Sir Peter Parker.”

* The report originated in this excellent and vigilant officer (now Lord Exmouth) having, as commander-in-chief, very properly ordered a court of inquiry to be held on board the *Menelaus*, off Toulon, in September 1812, to inquire into the circumstances under which she grounded going into Malta, and which terminated in an official Report, signed by Captain Burlton, of the *Ville de Paris*; Captain Plampin, of the *Océan*; and Captain Leveson Gower,

We cite with pleasure a striking instance of his detestation of all dishonorable modes of warfare:—A Spanish settee privateer had seized in the night a fishing boat off Civita Vecchia, on the coast of Italy, the poor owner of which had a wife and eleven children, who almost entirely subsisted by his employment as a fisherman, and he himself was above 60 years of age. It appeared that the master of the Spanish privateer had not only taken the poor man's fish from him without making him any recompence, but had got his vessel in tow, and intended to take him and his men to Spain as prisoners—a proceeding equally contrary to the common dictates of humanity and to the established regulations of all civilized nations, which have uniformly agreed that the persons and property of unoffending fishermen should be secure from injury and molestation. The master, however, of this privateer, turned a deaf ear to all the supplication of this poor old man, either on his own behalf or that of his numerous family. Sir Peter, after hearing the case, expostulated warmly and feelingly with the Spaniard on his cruel and unlawful conduct, but the man remained unmoved, totally insensible as it appeared to all humane and honorable feelings. Sir Peter then used stronger language; and said to him, “Sir, you disgrace the nation to which you belong.—Instantly give up the vessel and fish to its proper owner; and in future allow poverty like his to pass unmolested.” The poor old man, on hearing he was at liberty and again in possession of his boat, fell upon his knees at the feet of Sir Peter, and forcibly seizing his hand, bathed it with his tears.

of the Elizabeth; acquitting both her captain and crew of any blame, and ascribing it entirely to the unusual circumstance, under a heavy swell, of the Menelaus striking, where before she had both gone in and out of Malta without touching.

Sir Peter then bought the fish of him, and after ordering them to be distributed among his sick men, towed the poor fisherman and his comrades in safety to their harbour.

While trying the rate of sailing with H.M.S. Blake, on the coast of Catalonia, the master at arms fell overboard. The sails were immediately hove all aback, and by the ready exertions of some men who jumped into one of the cutters, he was fortunately brought on board, though in a nearly exhausted state. Sir Peter ordered him to be put immediately into a warm bed, and then sent him some reviving cordials from his own cabin, giving strict directions that he should be taken care of, and that whatever nourishment the surgeon might think serviceable should be supplied him by his steward. Thus, by the humane attention of Sir Peter Parker, was a valuable life in a great measure preserved.

Whenever the chance of war placed prisoners in his hands, he always treated them with great kindness and attention, endeavouring as much as possible to prevent their feeling too keenly the loss of their liberty. On the recapture of a Spanish galleon which had been taken by two French frigates, a French lieutenant and two midshipmen were found in charge of her, each of whom dined with Sir Peter while they remained on board, and received from him every possible kindness on their leaving the ship at Plymouth. Sir Peter seeing the lieutenant about to be given up as a prisoner in a foreign country, without money and without friends, put a handsome sum of money into his hands, which might abundantly relieve him from all immediate anxiety, and at the same time gave him the address of his agent, authorising him to apply for more in case the remittances he expected should not arrive from

France. Overcome by his feelings, some minutes elapsed before the lieutenant was able to return thanks for this unexpected generosity; he at last said that words were unable to express half his gratitude; that he felt he had been treated more like a friend than a prisoner, and should he return to his country in safety, he would never cease to speak of the disinterested generosity of his noble enemy.

In recording these instances of the amiable disposition of Sir Peter Parker, we attach to them no merit of an extraordinary nature; we rather delineate qualities which are common to the service in general, and not peculiar to any individual member of it. Bred to a profession wherein the generous, not less than the heroic virtues are sedulously cultivated, it would have been singular if in so noble a school his heart had not been early moulded to the best affections. He had before him numerous living models of the most exalted heroism, and the most distinguished moral excellence. He had seen the manly spirit, the prompt benevolence, the active charities of the christian hero, shining in those illustrious characters which adorn his profession, and spreading by their universality a general lustre over the service at large, and communicating their divine impulse as much to the breast of the common sailor as to that of the more finished officer. And, indeed, it may with truth be affirmed, that of all professions none is more highly calculated than the naval to inspire the mind of man with those exalted feelings which lead to the perfection of the human character; since none more deeply excites in early youth those religious impressions which are the safeguards of man through the perils of life, and from whence the virtues take their best and firmest shoots. The qualities necessary to form the character of a good sailor, are those which mankind so generally

combine to admire, that the attainment of these is the sure road to that high respect which every where surrounds the individual who possesses them.

In contemplating the works of human art, the mind of man descends ; but in surveying the grand and bolder structure of that mighty universe which is the theatre of the sailor's life, his mind is lifted to that admiration, and to those reflections which expand and elevate it, kindling in it that grateful adoration and that noble enthusiasm of sentiment which are the prevailing features in his character. The sublime and stormy element on which he floats, by continually reminding him of the precarious tenure of his own existence, and of his hourly dependance on the will and goodness of Providence, inspires him, in a sense of his own dangers and occasional sufferings, with a benevolent commiseration for the miseries of others, and disposes him actively where the occasion occurs, to feel for and lighten in them those burdens which so often press heavily on himself. Thus his heart is taught to be compassionate to his fellow-creatures, and to see in those who are destined to participate in the hardships and perils of his own condition, a circle of kindred to which his heart is ever open.* From these sources of moral

* We may cite an instance of this, of too noble a nature not to deserve a place here, in illustration of the aptitude of British seamen thus to feel, and act. In the year 1800 when our fleet was on the point of forcing the passage of the Dardanelles, the *Ajax*, of 80 guns, caught fire, and blew up. A British merchant from Constantinople who was in her, and who, prior to the explosion, with many other wretched sufferers, had jumped overboard to seek a refuge in the waves from the fury of the flames, unable to swim, had the good fortune to lay hold of an oar, floating by the ship, whereon he supported himself. An exhausted

excellence arise those manly virtues which adorn the breast of the British Sailor. Generosity, intrepidity, ingenuousness, that open honesty of character, which, practising no guile, is suspicious of no deceit, and that universal sympathy towards each other, in difficulty, misfortune, or affliction, which scarcely in any other class of society prevails in an equal degree; which makes a family of a community, produces a common fellowship together, and renders every sailor the friend of the sailor. To this may be added, that Nelsonian Pillar of their character, a sincerity in their friendships, which, true as their needle, nothing can shake; which adversity strengthens, and prosperity does not impair; which extends to the ashes of the fallen, not less than to the griefs of the living; and which, founded in the calamities, the dangers, and the glories of their profession, is more durable than the fragile affections of the lighter world, which vanity, or inconstancy too often undermine. Hence they become moulded not less to the noble qualities of their profession, than to the softer virtues, which, in the shade of domestic life, give a charm and grace to civil society.

It is to this proud race we owe not merely our maritime glory, but the preservation of our national independence, and our pre-eminence among the nations of the world. While these virtues continue to be their polar star, still shall they ride triumphant over the waves, and

sailor seeing it approach him caught hold of it, but on perceiving this individual owing his safety to it, and aware that it could not sustain both, he instantly asked him if he could swim, and being told he could not, he immediately said—"then I wont drown you and myself too"—and let go his hold, and struck away, resigning himself to his fate. Fortunately a passing boat, on its way to the Ajax, saved them both, and this generous tar never even made himself known to the individual who thus owed to him his life.

Britain, girted by their arm, rule paramount sovereign of the seas.—Europe shall owe to her her future safety, as she has been indebted to her for her present deliverance —And when the passions and prejudices of the present moment shall have passed away, and the historian and the philosopher shall be able to contemplate with coolness the wonderful events of latter years, and to consider the primary means by which Europe has been saved from the overwhelming moral and political tempest, which in the wreck of a great empire had nearly engulfed her laws, her liberties, and her altars; he will point to the beacons of her preservation in the heroism of British sailors; and the glories of TRAFALGAR, shining with eternal lustre on the universal annals of mankind, shall enshrine the fame of its heroes with the unfading splendour of imperishable renown.

The high qualities here described were those this excellent officer sought to cultivate, and under the influence of which he heroically laid down his life. We shall offer no apology for having thus obtruded on the public eye this imperfect sketch of the naval career and services of Sir Peter Parker. What can be more interesting to the feelings of a nation, or more conducive to the protection of its best interests, than to hold up to the admiration of its sons the lives of those martyrs of glory, who perishing in its defence, have deserved its tears, and acquired the palm of its eternal regrets? Who can survey the mangled heaps of illustrious British dead, whose bones now bleach the heights of Waterloo, and not, in sighing, heave a wish, that each individual trait of heroism which adorned their fall might have been rescued from the darkness of the grave; that nothing might be lost which could increase, or extend, the gratitude of the nation to the families of those gallant Britons who on the memorable day of that all-glorious battle died to redeem from destruction

the social edifice of European civilization, and to give stability to the hallowed constitution of their own soil. Memorials such as these instruct and elevate mankind, and lead to what is great in the human character. Greece and Rome reserved the lives and services of such men for the proudest materials of their history, and traced in the flowing blood of their naval and military heroes, the purest cement of public freedom. The memory of the brave who fell in battle was the idol theme of their poets and historians. Genius swelled their triumphs, and History gave them immortality. To the heroes of our own nation it is equally due, frequently to present memorials of their services to the grateful contemplation of their countrymen. It keeps alive in the public mind, not only what every man owes to his defenders, but also to his country; and while it animates the youth of a state to emulate the virtues which it teaches them to admire, it dries the tear of the widow, and assuages the sorrows of parents, by the soothing monument it erects to the fame and the virtue of their offspring.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

NARRATIVE

BY

COMMODORE SIR PETER PARKER,

OF HIS

ATTACK ON SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, JUNE 28, 1775.

IT having been judged advisable to make an attempt upon this place by his Majesty's forces, the fleet sailed from Cape Fear on the 1st of June, and on the 4th anchored off Charlestown bar. The 5th, sounded the bar and laid down buoys, preparatory to the intended entrance of the harbour. The 7th, all the frigates and most of the transports got over the bar into five fathom hole. The 9th, General Clinton landed on Long Island with about four or five hundred men. The 10th, the Bristol got over the bar with some difficulty. The 15th, gave the captains of the squadron my arrangement for the attack of the batteries on Sullivan's Island; and the next day acquainted General Clinton that the ships were ready. The general fixed on the 23d for our joint attack, but the wind proving unfavourable, prevented its taking effect. The 25th, the Experiment arrived, and next day came over the bar, when a new arrangement was made for the attack. The 28th, at half-an-hour after nine in the morning, informed General Clinton

by signal, that I should go on the attack. At half-an-hour after ten I made the signal to weigh; and, about a quarter after eleven, the Bristol, Experiment, Active, and Solebay, brought-up against the fort. The Thunder bomb, covered by the Friendship armed vessel, brought the salient angle of the east bastion to bear N.W. by N.: and Colonel James (who has ever since our arrival been very anxious to give the best assistance) threw several shells, a little before and during the engagement, in a very good direction. The Sphynx, Actæon, and Syren, were to have been to the westward, to prevent fireships or other vessels from annoying the ships engaged, to enfilade the works, and, if the rebels should be driven from them, to cut off their retreat, if possible. This last service was not performed, owing to the ignorance of the pilot, who run the three frigates aground. The Sphynx and Syren got off in a few hours, but the Actæon remained fast till the next morning, when the captain and officers thought proper to scuttle and set her on fire. I ordered a Court Martial on the captain, officers, and company, and they have been honourably acquitted. Captain Hope made his armed ship as useful as he could on the occasion, and he merits every thing that can be said in his favour. During the time of our being abreast of the fort, which was near ten hours, a brisk fire was kept up by the ships, with intervals; and we had the satisfaction, after being engaged two hours, to oblige the rebels to slacken their fire very much. We drove large parties several times out of the fort, which were replaced by others from the main. About half-an-hour after three, a considerable reinforcement from Mount Pleasant hung a man on a tree at the back of the fort, and we imagine that the same party ran away about an hour after, for the fort was then totally silenced, and evacuated for near an hour and a half; but the rebels, finding that our army could not take possession, about six o'clock a considerable body of people re-entered the fort, and renewed the firing from two or three guns, the rest being, I suppose, dismounted. About nine o'clock, it being very dark, great part of our ammunition expended, the people fatigued, the tide of ebb almost done, no prospect from the eastward, and no possibility of our being of any further service, I ordered the ships to withdraw to their former moorings. Their Lordships will see plainly by this account, that if the troops could have co-operated on this attack, his Majesty would have been in possession of Sullivan's Island. But I must beg leave here to be fully understood, lest it should be

imagined I mean to throw the most distant reflection on our army. I should not discharge my conscience were I not to acknowledge, that such was my opinion of his Majesty's troops, from the general down to the private soldier, that after I had been engaged some hours, and perceived that the troops had not got a footing on the north end of Sullivan's Island, I was perfectly satisfied that the landing was impracticable, and that the attempt would have been the destruction of many brave men, without the least probability of success; and this, I am certain, will appear to be the case, when General Clinton represents his situation. The Bristol had 40 men killed and 71 wounded; the Experiment, 23 killed and 56 wounded; and both of them suffered much in their hulls, masts, and rigging; the Active had Lieutenant Pike killed and six men wounded; and the Solebay eight men wounded. Not one man who was quartered in the beginning of the action on the Bristol's quarter-deck escaped being killed or wounded. Captain Morris lost his right arm, and received other wounds, and is since dead; the master is wounded in the right arm, but will recover the use of it. I received several contusions at different times, but as none of them are on any part where the least danger can be apprehended, they are not worth mentioning. Lieutenants Caulfield, Molloy, and Nugent were the lieutenants of the Bristol in the action; they behaved so remarkably well, that it is impossible to say to whom the preference is due; and so, indeed, I may say of all the petty officers, ships' company, and volunteers. At the head of the latter I must place Lord William Campbell, who was so condescending as to accept of the direction of some guns on the lower gun-deck. His Lordship received a contusion on his left side, but I have the happiness to inform their Lordships that it has not proved of much consequence. Captain Scott, of the Experiment, lost his left arm, and is otherwise so much wounded that I fear he will not recover. I cannot conclude this letter without remarking that when it was known that we had many men too weak to come to quarters, almost all the seamen belonging to the transports offered their service with a true British spirit and a just sense of the cause we were engaged in. I accepted of upwards of fifty to supply the place of our sick. The masters of many of the transports attended with their boats, but particular thanks are certainly due to Mr. Chambers, the master of the Mercury.

The following ships composed the squadron then under the command of Commodore Sir Peter Parker :—

<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Guns.</i>	<i>Commanders.</i>
Bristol	50	{ Commodore Sir Peter Parker. Captain J. Morris.
Experiment	50	—— Scott.
Solebay	28	—— John Synonds.
Actæon	28	—— Christopher Atkins.
Active	28	—— William Williams.
Syren	28	—— Furneaux.
Sphynx	20	—— Anthony Hunt.
Ranger (A.S.)	22	—— Roger Willis.
Friendship (A.S.)	12	—— Charles Hope.
Thunder Bomb	8	—— James Reid.
Carcass Do.....	8	—— T. Dring.

No. II.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

BY LORD BYRON.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave
But Nations swell the funeral cry,
And triumph weeps above the Brave.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent :
In vain their bones unburied lie—
All earth becomes their monument !

A tomb is their's on every page—
An epitaph on every tongue ;
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail—to them belong.

For them the voice of festal Mirth
Grows hush'd—*their name* the only sound,
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not—
 Lamented by admiring Foes—
 Who would not share their glorious lot?
 Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant PARKER! thus enshrin'd
 Thy life, thy fall, thy fame, shall be;
 And early Valour, glowing, find
 A model in thy memory!

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
 In woe that Glory cannot quell,
 And shuddering hear of Victory,
 Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
 When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
 Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
 While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them—though not for thee—
 They cannot chuse but weep the more:
 Deep for the dead the grief must be,
 Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

No. III.

JOURNAL,

BY CAPTAIN PETER PARKER,

Of the Proceedings of His Majesty's Ship the Melpomene, in a violent Gale of Wind, in which she lost her Rudder.

WE parted from the fleet of Lord Collingwood on Sunday, the 8th of December, 1805, the Orion, Endymion, and Weazel, accompanied us. We were going to scour the Mediterranean, in quest of a squadron of frigates, who, under the command of Jerome Buonaparte, were reported to have sailed from Genoa. The wind at W. and W.N.W. continued pretty moderate until the 11th of December; on which morning we captured a small Spanish settee, laden with stores, the crew of whom escaped on shore. We took her in tow for the purpose of conveying her to the Commodore (Captain Codrington), who was to windward; but at 11 P.M. in a violent squall, we cut her adrift, to save her from sinking, and afterwards scuttled her, the Weazel in company; Cape Opneza W. by N. 10 or 11 miles; the Melpomene and Weazel were sent, on the 9th, in shore, to intercept any vessels coming along the coast, and to try and cut out any vessels at anchor under Cape St. Martin. At 6, violent heavy squalls; up main-sail, with the Orion or Endymion in sight; most dreadful squalls at 8 A.M. of the 11th; in top-sails: at noon wore ship. At day-light on the 12th made Majorca, bearing N.N.W. at 10 carried away the larboard buntkin: 10. 30. found the main yard sprung, lowered it down, and fished it. 12th P.M. violent gales: at 2, wore and swayed the main-yard up: at 6, Cape Dragonera S.S.W. 7 leagues, Weazel in company. 13th, A.M. reefed the fore-sail, Majorca in sight, to leeward: at 8, owing to the violence of the gale and the heavy sea, bore up with the Weazel for the island; ship rolling and labouring very hard, shifted the rigging in fore and aft. 13th, P.M. wore under the lee of Majorca: at 4,

more moderate, reefed and set the main-sail. 14th, A.M. short violent squalls, with heavy rain, thunder and lightning, the ship labouring and straining much in every part : 14th, P.M. found it impossible to keep the sea, bore up again for Majorca, passed the Weazel and a Danish brig on the other tack (from this time lost sight of the Weazel) : at 9, hove-to under the lee of Majorca, Cape Pera N.W. by N. 10 miles. 15th, A.M. moderate breezes : at 6. 30. filled and stood out from under the lee of the island : at 12, in a violent squall, clewed all sail up. 15, P.M. dark dismal weather, reefed and set fore-sail : at 4, a little more moderate, north part of Majorca N. by E. 5 or 6 leagues : at 5, wore, with the most violent squalls remembered by any person in the ship in any part of the world, the wind flying about, with thunder, lightning, rain, and sleet ; braced about several times : at 7. 50. hove-to on the starboard tack, wind from N. by W. to W. by N. : at 9, came on a most tremendous squall, with thunder, lightning, hail, sleet, and snow, clewed all sail up : the second lieutenant, Mornes, had the watch : at about a quarter past 9 the main-mast was struck by lightning, with a horrid crash ; the fluid exploded by the pumps, and hurt a midshipman and one seaman : at 11. 50. a little more settled, wore and hove-to. 16th, A.M. wind from N. to N.E. more steady : at 8, the most dark dismal weather possible, examined the main-mast, found it severely splintered in many places, particularly about the hoops and in the wake of the main trusses, where copper had been nailed on.

16th, P.M. very dark unsettled weather, the sea getting down : wind shifted to S.W. altered course to N.E. in hopes of rejoining the Orion, who, we were informed, was off Barcelona, by a vessel which we spoke, and who had been also spoken by the Endymion : 7. 30. very squally dark weather, close reefed the top-sails. 17th, A.M. dark hazy weather, wind very unsettled, trimmed the sails several times : at 3, a breeze from the westward ; at 4, squally ; in top-gallant-sails, squared the yards : at 9, the course was altered, to bring the sea more under the lee bow : the sea rising violently all around us, saw land N.W. observed whirlwinds, water-spouts, and flashes of lightning in all directions ; the sky dreadfully awful ; clewed up, and furled all the sails, and prepared for a gale, or what landmen call a tempest : at 10. 30. the ship totally unmanageable, and labouring violently : at 11, a very heavy sea pooped the ship, stove in the dead lights, and filled the cabin with water : the main-deck at this time was up to the combings of

the hatchway with water, and obliged all the hatchways to be battened down : P.M. the wind increased to a perfect hurricane, with most violent thunder, lightning, and rain : at 1, the ship was struck with lightning, and our main-mast much hurt : at 2, most tremendous squalls, with rain, thunder, &c. the fore, main, and mizen-storm-stay-sails blew to atoms : the ship entirely unmanageable, and the sea striking her with the greatest violence in every direction, and whole seas breaking over us. At 1. 50. the stern was struck by a tremendous sea : at 2, by another ; the rudder-head gave way, chocked the rudder up in the rudder case ; prepared to secure it with the pendants, Serjeant Milligan volunteered and went over and cut the pendants adrift ; the ship at this time labouring most violently. At 3, effected securing of the rudder with the pendants. From the time the sea pooped us we were obliged to keep all pumps going, as, owing to the violent labouring of the ship, she leaked in every part. At 3. 30. the main-top-mast without any sail, blew in three pieces ; the middle part blew a long way from the ship, the other parts hung down over the main-yard. At 4, both the rudder chains gave way, hauled in the pendants ; hundreds of different sorts of birds blown on board the ship. At 6, in furling the fore-sail, Frank Walker fell from the fore-yard on the best bower anchor ; got him, though most violently bruised ; secured all the guns, boats, &c. as well as possible. At 7, the wind a little more steady : at 9, increased as before : at 12, ship labouring violently, and making water so as to oblige all pumps to be kept going. 18th, A.M. the wind shifted to N.E. the boats on the quarters were rolled in the water, filled, and stove : at 4, wore, with violent rain and tremendous thunder, lightning, and hail : at day-light found the rudder gone from the stern-post ; and that, during the night, the sea had washed off the booms, several studding-sails, hammocks, clothes, &c. as, owing to the violent labouring of the ship, all the lashings broke ; also found the top chest, &c. blown, cut the main-top : at 10, the carpenter reported the main-mast sprung a few feet above the quarter-deck ; sent hands up immediately and cut away the wreck of the main-top-mast, top-sail-yard, &c. blowing so very hard, impossible to attempt saving any thing. 18th, P.M. wore, the sea mountains high, ship lying-to under a storm-mizen-stay-sail : at 3, got out a cable from the stern with hawsers, &c. to try and wear the ship by ; but found it impossible : at 4, saw the land, Cape Gross N.E. Cape Salon N. 9 or 10 leagues, ship coming up to N. by W. off N W. by N. At 5, struck the mizen-top-mast, and tried every method to wear without effect ; the fore-stay-sail and two

jibs blew to atoms, braced by, and there being now very little hopes to clear the land, cut away the cables and hawsers, ranged the other cables, and prepared for anchoring: at 9, the wind came more northerly, by which we were drifted off shore; sounded every 10 minutes, in 50 and 60 fathoms, muddy ground, ship labouring much.

19th, A.M. a little more moderate, with a heavy swell; employed making a Pakenham's rudder: at 8, saw the Colombretes Islands, bearing W.S.W. (two points on the lee bow) 5 leagues; the decks leaking in all parts of the ship: 19th, P.M. out all boats, and made all sail on the foremast, in hopes of wearing, as we were drifting bodily down on the rocky uninhabited Colombretes. At 3. 30. found she would not wear; took in the head-sails, and rounded to, prepared for anchoring; at 3. 45. anchored with the small bower, with a spring on it to cast by, in 60 fathoms, South Island W. by S. more moderate; employed about the rudder: at 11, the wind at N. with a heavy rain, freshened rapidly; veered to two cables, in hopes to ride till day-light, so as to prepare the rudder for shipping: at 12, tremendous squalls, with thunder, lightning, and rain. 20th December, A.M. at 1, found the ship driving; cut the cable, cast with the spring, and then cut it also; most tremendous gales; set the storm-stay-sails and reefed fore-sail: at 2, it cleared a little, saw the islands W.S.W. the ship would lie no higher. In this awful state, without any chance of saving the ship or a single life, the wind shifted in a dreadful squall, and allowed the ship to lie up S.E. for about 40 minutes, which put us clear of danger. Towards day-light the gale moderated, all hands about the rudder: at noon, the land about Cape St. Martin's S.W. 12 leagues. 20th, P.M. wind S. with a long rolling sea, two sail in sight; employed fitting guys, pendants, &c. for the rudder; drove two eye-bolts in the cap part of the rudder, so as to fit preventer guys made of a spare messenger, in case the top-chain should give way: at 2, being all ready, got it over the side: at 3. 15. succeeded in shipping it: got the guys and pendants in at the main-deck ports, and housed it close to the stern-post, and, after many hopes and fears, found it would answer: moderate, fair, wind variable; cleared the decks, coiled away the cables, &c. At midnight, sprung up a brisk gale from the westward; employed about securing the rudder: 21st, A.M. ditto, fair with rain; armourer placed the hoops on the rudder head; found to our great joy the ship once more under command: at 7, a steady breeze from S.W. bore up and made sail for Malta; got up a jury main-top-mast, and set the sail close

reefed: at noon, Ivica S.E. 5 or 6 leagues; found the ship gripe, shortened sail in the after yards: P.M. several sail in sight: found the guys of the rudder much chafed, fresh parcelled them; set steering sails on the foremast: at 12, fresh breezes, ship steering well; shortened sail on the foremast, wind W. and W.S.W. 22d, A.M. fair: at 3, hard gales, with rain; ship broached-to: at 8, rolling violently; during night ship steering badly: at day-light found the fore-channel very badly started: got up runners and tackles, and secured the foremast: P.M. hard gales, ship steering wild, handed the top-sails: at noon, more moderate; set reefed fore-sail, ship steering very well.

23d, A.M. fresh breezes and cloudy, set close-reefed fore-top-sail; going at the rate of $12\frac{1}{2}$ knots, steering well: at 8, much rain; found the starboard rudder pendant carried away, and the other much chafed; fitted new ones, and at noon hove-to and boused them taut. 23d, P.M. moderate weather: at 2, St. Pierres, E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. found the rudder messenger gone on the starboard side, hauled it in and repaired it; then found one of the top-chains gone, swept for it and repaired it: at 5. 30. bore up, violent lightning: at 6, Toro Island E. by W. ship going 11 and $12\frac{1}{2}$ knots, and steering easy. 24th December, A.M. hard gales and squally, with rain: at 8, found one of the starboard rudder pendants gone, got it in; then one of the links of the top-chain gave way, swept for it, hove-to and succeeded in repairing them both; bore up and made sail. 24th, P.M. made a new spare rudder pendant, ship steering large: at 4, saw land a-head, going $12\frac{1}{2}$ knots an hour: at 8, fresh breezes, Maritimo E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. 25th, A.M. steering well, moderate weather, wind W.N.W. made all sail, squally, in steering sails. 25th, P.M. moderate and cloudy, ship steering well; at 4, Goza, S.S.E. 5 or 6 miles; running along shore for Valetta: at 12, falling little wind, anchored at 12 fathoms off the light-house; out boats and warped further in for the night. 26th, at 8 A.M. warped into the harbour and secured the ship; P.M. began to strip the ship: found the fore-yard sprung and the ship very much strained.

No. IV.

H.M.S. Menelaus, April 19, 1812, off Toulon.

SIR,

HAVING availed myself of the favourable circumstances which presented themselves yesterday, to reconnoitre Toulon, I have infinite satisfaction in enclosing a most accurate statement of the enemy's force ; and as you must have observed the manner in which this service was effected, it remains for me only to acquaint you, the enemy's fire was silenced by that of the *Menelaus*, which caused an explosion of the fort ; and, for the whole, I am indebted to the zeal and gallantry that inspired my officers and ship's company.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

PETER PARKER.

*To Vice-Admiral Sir E. Pellew, Bart.
Commander-in-chief, &c.*

No. V.

H. M. S. Menelaus,

SIR,

Off Monte Christo, 12th August, 1812.

IT is my duty to acquaint you, that I attacked the port of St. Stephano, in the Bay of Orbitello, on the night of the 10th instant, where a small convoy of the enemy's transports had taken shelter (consisting of a large brig, a bombard, and some settees), to all appearance in perfect security, under the strong citadel and fortresses which protect that harbour and its entrance. Having reconnoitred the port the day before, I determined to shew the enemy what British seamen could accomplish when opposed to the enemies of their country. The iron front of the place, which is strongly garrisoned with that of Orbitello, only two miles from it, and in the neighbourhood of Port Hercule, induced me from a firm reliance on my officers and the brave Menelaus' crew, notwithstanding the strength of the place, to attempt its capture by storm, and to lead them myself to the assault.

In consequence of this determination, I left the ship with the boats, accompanied by Lieutenants Pierson and Yates, Mr. Thomas Rutherford the master, the young gentlemen, and a party of marines under Lieutenants Beynon and Wilcocks. My previous plan of operations having been explained to all, and the necessary arrangements made, we proceeded to the port, where the fire of round and grape shot, with showers of musquetry, announced our arrival. The marines, immortalizing themselves, jumped out of the boats, mounted the hill, and driving three times the number of the enemy's troops before them, into a four-gun battery, which commanded the right of the harbour, stormed it, putting all to the sword, and spiking the guns, three 42-pounders and one 18-pounder, in a style which must ever reflect the highest honor on Lieutenants Beynon and Wilcocks, and their gallant men; and to the heroic conduct of Lieutenant Beynon, in leading the men so gallantly to the storm, must be attributed the saving of many lives in the boats

while engaged in boarding the vessels which were moored within half pistol shot of this battery, with six cables a-stern to the shore, two under their bottoms, and two a-head. Cries of Nelson and Wellington (the sign and countersign for the night) resounding through the harbour and the hills, proclaimed our possession of the battery and the vessels. It being now a dead calm, the exertions of every one were required to get the prizes out of the port: the brig was accordingly towed out, under the heaviest fire I ever saw, of round and grape from the citadel, the batteries, and several field-pieces, as well as musketry from all quarters, even out of the very windows of the town. The bombard, unfortunately, got hard and fast a-ground, and the endeavours of Lieutenant Pierson were foiled in attempting to get her off, or setting fire to her; she was therefore scuttled, and left a complete wreck. The brig was near sharing the same fate, from the tow-rope being shot away; but that gallant officer, Mr. Rutherford the master, soon had it replaced; and the enemy having had the precaution to haul the settees on shore, they were out of our reach. Service of this nature cannot be performed without loss, but when the enemy's force and situation are considered, it happily is trifling, being only two killed and five wounded. The destructive fire, however, from the launch's carronade, directed by Lieutenant Yates and that of the marines, accounts in some measure for this good fortune.

Having related the circumstances attending this enterprise, it becomes my bounden duty to inform you of the distinguished gallantry evinced by the officers and men. Each individual deserved the approbation of his country—all emulating each other in promoting its glory; and the successful termination of the enterprise is the best criterion of their merits. However, I must mention, in terms of admiration, the conduct of Mr. James Saunderson, master's mate, who on this occasion as well as on all others, is the first to put himself forward.

Our success is greatly damped by the loss of Mr. George Thomas Monroe, midshipman, who was shot in the act of waving his hat and crying out "Huzza! Huzza! fire away, boys!—fire!" I mention this as the only means I have of paying a tribute to the memory of this youth, whose gallantry and good conduct, and the many virtues he possessed, had justly endeared him to the whole ship's company.

To Lieutenant Rowland Mainwaring, whom I was obliged to leave in command of the ship, I feel particularly indebted, for his judicious arrangements to support us, had it been necessary. The brig is a government transport, laden with top-timbers and beams for a line of battle ship; the bombard was also a transport, laden with naval stores.

If my desire to do justice to the gallant officers and men who seconded me in this affair, has led me into too detailed an account, I trust my apologies will be accepted.

Enclosed are the returns of the vessels captured and destroyed, guns spiked, &c. and also of killed and wounded.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed)

PETER PARKER, Captain.

*To Sir Edward Pellew, Bart.
Vice-Admiral of the Red, Commander
in Chief,
&c. &c. &c.*

No. VI.

BULLETIN.

Admiralty-Office, Sept. 27, 1814.

CAPTAIN WAINWRIGHT, of His Majesty's ship *Tonnant*, arrived early this morning at this office, with dispatches from Vice-Admiral Sir A. Cochrane, commander in chief on the American station, with an account of the capture and destruction, by his Majesty's forces, of the city of Washington, on the 24th ult. after a severe but brilliant action, in which the enemy was defeated with great loss.

While this main attack was in progress, Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane had directed *two diversions to be made*, the one towards Baltimore, by the *Menelaus*, Captain Sir Peter Parker: the other up the Potomac, against Fort Washington, under Captain Gordon of the *Sea-horse*, *both of which had the desired effect*, though in the course of his operations Captain Sir Peter Parker was mortally wounded in a most gallant attack on a camp of the enemy's on shore, for which he had disembarked the seamen and marines of his ship.

No. VII.

Admiralty Office, September 27, 1814.

Copy of a Letter from Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, K. B. to John Wilson Croker, Esq. dated on board his Majesty's Ship Tomant, in the Patuxent, the 3d instant.

SIR,

I REGRET having occasion to detain the Iphigenia for a few minutes, to inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of the death of Sir Peter Parker, Bart. late captain of the Menelaus, which has just been announced to me by a letter from the surviving officer, of which I enclose a copy. My dispatch of yesterday will have apprized their Lordships of my having sent the Menelaus up the Chesapeake, above Baltimore, to make a diversion in that quarter. It appears, that after having frequently dislodged small bodies of the enemy, by landing parties of seamen and marines, her captain, at length, was drawn into an attack upon a force which proved greatly his superior in numbers, and accompanied by artillery. In a successful attack upon this superior force, and while routing the enemy, he received a wound that in a few minutes terminated his existence; and I have to lament the loss, not only of this gallant and enterprising officer, but of many brave men who were killed and wounded on the same occasion, of which a return is enclosed.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

ALEXANDER COCHRANE, Vice-Admiral
and Commander in Chief.

*H. M. S. Menelaus, off Pool's Island,
Chesapeake, Sept. 1, 1814.*

SIR,

WITH grief the deepest, it becomes my duty to communicate the death of Sir Peter Parker, Bart. late commander of his Majesty's Ship Menelaus, and the occurrences attending an attack on the enemy's troops, on the night of the 30th ult. encamped at Bellair. The previous and accompanying letters of Sir Peter Parker will, I presume, fully point out the respect the enemy on all occasions evince at the approach of our arms, retreating at every attack, though possessing a superiority of numbers of five to one. An intelligent black man gave us information of two hundred militia being encamped behind a wood, distant half a mile from the beach, and described their situation so as to give us the strongest hopes of cutting them off, and securing the largest part as our prisoners, destroying the camp, field-pieces, &c. and possessing also certain information that one man out of every five had been levied as a requisition on the eastern shore, for the purpose of being sent over for the protection of Baltimore, and who are now only prevented crossing the bay by the activity and vigilance of the tender and ship's boats. One hundred and four bayonets with twenty pikes were landed at eleven o'clock at night, under the immediate direction of Sir Peter Parker, Bart. captain, the first division headed by myself, and the second division by Lieutenant Pearce. On arriving at the ground, we discovered the enemy had shifted his position, as we were then informed, to the distance of a mile farther; having taken the look-out picquet immediately on our landing, we were in assurance our motions had not been discovered, and with the deepest silence followed on for the camp. After a march of between four and five miles in the country, we found the enemy posted on a plain surrounded by woods, with the camp in their rear; they were drawn up in line and perfectly ready to receive us; a single moment was not to be lost; by a smart fire and instant charge, we commenced the attack, forced them from their position, putting them before us in full retreat to the rear of their artillery, where they again made a stand, showing a disposition to outflank us on the right; a movement was instantly made by Lieutenant Pearce's division to force them from that quarter; and it was at this time, while animating his men in the most heroic manner,

that Sir Peter Parker received his mortal wound, which obliged him to quit the field, and he expired in a few minutes. Lieutenant Pearce, with his division, soon routed the enemy, while that under my command gained and passed the camp. One of the field-pieces was momentarily in our possession, but obliged to quit it from superior numbers. The marines under Lieutenants Beynon and Poe formed our centre, and never was bravery more conspicuous. Finding it impossible to close on the enemy from the rapidity of their retreat, having pursued them upwards of a mile, I deemed it prudent to retire towards the beach, which was effected in the best possible order, taking with us from the field twenty-five of our wounded, the whole we could find, the enemy not even attempting to regain the ground they had lost. From three prisoners (cavalry) taken by us, we learnt their force amounted to five hundred militia, a troop of horse, and five pieces of artillery; and since, by flags of truce, I am led to believe their numbers much greater. Repelling a force of such magnitude with so small a body as we opposed to them, will, I trust, speak for itself; and although our loss has been severe, I hope the lustre acquired to our arms, will compensate for it.

Permit me, Sir, to offer to your notice the conduct of Mr. James Stopford Hoare, master's mate of this ship, who on this, as well as other trying occasions, evinced the greatest zeal and gallantry. In justice to Sub-Lieutenant Johnson, commanding the Jane tender, I must beg to notice the handsome manner in which he has at all times volunteered his services. Herewith I beg leave to enclose you a list of the killed, wounded, and missing in this affair.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

HENRY CREASE,
Acting Commander.

To Vice-Admiral Cochrane,
&c. &c. &c.

*List of Officers, Seamen, and Marines, killed, wounded, &c. belonging to His Majesty's
Ship Menelaus.*

Killed.—Sir Peter Parker, Bart. captain.; J. T. Sanders, midshipman; R. Friar and R. Robinson, quarter-masters; J. Perren, swabber; T. Doris, sail-maker; G. Hall,

ordinary seaman ; J. Evans, serjeant of marines ; W. Hooper, W. Davis, R. Johnson, W. Rogers, W. Powell, and R. Jones, marines.

Wounded.—T. Fitzmaurice, boatswain's mate, severely ; J. M'Alister, J. Daley, and J. Wilson, able seamen, severely ; J. Mooney, seaman, severely ; M. Cullin, seaman, slightly ; J. Bath, seaman, severely ; J. Samuel, captain of the mast, slightly ; J. Cooper and J. Malcolm, seamen, severely ; A. M'Arthur, captain of the forecastle, severely ; W. Nol, seaman, slightly ; T. Toffield, quarter-master's mate, severely ; M. Halligan, quarter-gunner, slightly ; B. G. Beynon, lieutenant of marines, severely ; G. Poe, ditto, slightly ; J. Listt, J. Harvey, J. Schriber, G. Morrell, and W. Smith, marines, slightly ; W. Golatham, E. Turner, and W. Pritchard, marines, J. Manderson, seaman, J. Rowe, landman, and G. Hobbs, captain of the fore-top, severely.

No. VIII.

The Morning Post, Monday, May 15, 1815.

FUNERAL OF THE LATE SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

YESTERDAY morning, at six o'clock, the remains of the gallant and lamented Sir Peter Parker, Bart. captain of his Majesty's frigate *Menclaus*, were conveyed to the family vault in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. This gallant officer met his death in August last, at the storming of the American camp, at Bellair, while heroically leading on a party of seamen and marines against a very superior body of the enemy, whom they routed;—when in the moment of victory he received a mortal wound, which deprived his profession and his country of one of its brightest ornaments.

Sir Peter had received in October last the honours of a public funeral at Bermuda, to which island his body had been carried from the Chesapeake in the *Hebrus* frigate, Captain Palmer, whose desperate action with, and brilliant capture of the *L'Etoile* French frigate, is fresh in the public recollection; but it having subsequently been found to have been the wish of Sir Peter Parker, if he fell on service abroad, that his remains should be brought home and deposited in the vault of his family, the *Hebrus* was again entrusted with this melancholy freight.—Every attention in the conveyance of the body was shown in the most handsome manner by the Admiralty. On the arrival of the *Hebrus* at Portsmouth, she was ordered round to Sheerness, from whence in the Admiralty barge the Corpse was brought to Deptford on Saturday evening, attended by Captain Palmer, his officers, and a proportionate body of seamen, where it was received in the dock-yard with appropriate attention by the officers of government; and at half past five yesterday morning the

Admiralty barge, with the Union Jack up, bearing the body on a military bier, resting on a platform surmounted by black feathers appeared off Westminster-stairs, followed by three government barges, with pennants, containing the officers and seamen appointed to attend the ceremony. At six the boats drew up to the stairs, when the whole landed, and being met by the attendants and friends waiting on shore to join the naval procession, they proceeded to St. Margaret's Church in the following manner :

Four Mutes.

Plumes of Black Feathers, with Pages to assist.

THE BODY

on a bier, carried on the shoulders of thirty seamen, preceded by Captain Palmer, in full uniform, and naval mourning; his lieutenants on each side, dressed in the same way, attended by three of Sir Peter's late midshipmen, and his brave lieutenant Mr. Pearce, who bore off Sir Peter Parker from the field of battle, after he received his mortal wound, his clerk, Mr. Nicholl: the relatives of Sir Peter.

Sir George Dallas, Bart. Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Neville, as chief mourners, followed by a numerous assemblage of his friends, among whom we noticed the following distinguished persons:—Lords Dufferin, F. Bentincke; Admirals, Sirs John Borlase Warren, the Honourable Henry Blackwood, Bart. George Cockburn, George Hope; Admirals Pickmore, Parker, and Nugent; Sir Robert Dallas, Bart. judge of His Majesty's Court of Common Pleas; the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mr. Croker; the Hon. and Rev. John Blackwood; Post Captains, Honorables Geo. Poulett, and C. Paget, Byron, and Campbell; Captains Rowley, Hamilton, Schomberg, Seymour, Talbot, Pechell, Whyte, Blackwood, Edwards, &c. all desirous by their attendance on this mournful occasion to shew the just respect in which they held the naval services and eminent professional talents of this distinguished officer, thus prematurely, yet gloriously, cut off in the flower of his life.

Before reaching the church, they were received and joined by the Rev. Mr. Groves,

who, heading the procession, conducted it to the church, where the ceremony was performed in a very impressive manner, and rendered additionally interesting by the novel and affecting sight of thirty-six British seamen ranged up the centre of the church on both sides of the bier, on which lay the sword and hat of the deceased, surmounted by the colours of the navy. Notwithstanding the hour was so early, the concourse of people was very great, but all gave way as the procession advanced, and no interruption was experienced in reaching the church.

No. IX.

*H. M. S. Menelaus,
Spithead, 16th May, 1815.*

SIR,

THE officers and ship's company of the *Menelaus*, anxious to shew their deep regret at the loss of, and high respect for, the memory of their late Captain Sir Peter Parker, Bart. have entered into a voluntary subscription for the purpose of erecting a trifling Monument to his memory. A sum amounting to £300 has been lodged in my hands, and if Lady Parker will be pleased to honour us by accepting this trifling mark of respect, the sum shall be forwarded to you.

I feel it but justice to express to you, Sir, the strong regret felt by every individual in the ship that any circumstance should have deprived us of the melancholy pleasure of conveying the body to its native country, and resigning it to those relatives and friends who alone had a claim to it.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

(Signed)

HENRY CREASE, Senior Lieutenant.

To Sir George Dallas, Bart.

*Green-street, Grosvenor-square,
May 18, 1815.*

SIR,

I AM extremely sorry that my absence from town yesterday deprived me of the honour of receiving your letter in sufficient time to acknowledge its receipt by return of post. It is impossible I can adequately express how deeply Lady Parker is overcome by the mark of attention conveyed in your letter to the memory of her late beloved and heroic husband Sir Peter Parker, on the part of the officers and crew of the *Menelaus*, to whom, while living, we knew him to be so warmly and so justly attached; and she begs I will, in her name, entreat you will have the goodness to signify to the officers and crew, in the manner you may deem most appropriate, the grateful sense she entertains of their kindness and generous attentions to her on this melancholy occasion. She accepts with a gratitude that can terminate only with her existence the handsome subscription they have been pleased to deposit in your hands, for the purpose of erecting a Monument to his memory; and she bids me say, it shall be so erected that while it records his virtues and public services, it shall equally transmit to posterity their goodness, by bearing on its inscription that it was raised by the gallant men it was his pride and happiness to command, to whom, on this sad occasion, shall exclusively be the merit of thus honourably preserving his fame.

It would have been infinitely soothing to her griefs if the course of the service had admitted of the *Menelaus* being employed to bring home the body. But I am persuaded, under the disappointment you are pleased so feelingly to express at having been deprived of this melancholy pleasure, it will be a satisfaction to you to know, that this duty was performed with a care and devotion of friendship on the part of Captain Palmer, and

the officers and crew of the Hebrus, that could not fail to attract as warmly the approbation of the officers and crew of the Menelaus, as it has called forth the gratitude of Lady Parker and her family.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your very faithful humble servant,

GEORGE DALLAS.

H. M. S. Menelaus, May 19, 1815.

SIR,

YOUR letter is just received; and as no language of mine is at all adequate to express so fully the sentiments it contains, I have therefore read it to the officers and ship's company.—Indeed, Sir, it is impossible to describe our feelings on this subject—it has again and ever will draw tears from our hearts.—We adore and reverence his memory, and had our wishes and request been complied with to be permitted to bring home the body of our dear and brave Captain, we could have been better satisfied—no funeral could have ever witnessed more universal and heartfelt grief than is for ever fixed in every individual's breast in this ship. Such were the feelings, to a man, in the ship, the removal of his body produced a dissatisfaction almost amounting to a mutiny—the admiral's order could not be obeyed—it was directed to be taken from the ship in the evening.—The crew, in a body, came on the quarter-deck, and begged that their solicitations might be forwarded to the Commander in chief, if they were not allowed to bear the body to its interment, at all events, that it should be suffered to remain with them until the following day, which request the Admiral thought proper to comply with.

In the subscription I have endeavoured to anticipate the wishes both of you and Lady Parker, that it should not be extravagant, or in any manner attended with inconvenience—the prize-money being paid (five dollars a seaman), in indulgence to their feelings, I met their wishes. I was under the necessity of most positively limiting the sum—finding, poor fellows! on the very mention of the subject, instinctively, at a moment, they crowded around me with every farthing they possessed.

Your letter, Sir, moves those feelings afresh—it would have pained your heart to have witnessed the effects of its perusal—unanimously they have desired me, in the warmest and most respectful language, to offer their lasting duty and gratitude to poor Lady Parker.—We are and shall always be her most devoted and attached servants.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient humble servant,

HENRY CREASE,

Senior Lieutenant.

No X.

To the Editor of the Biographical Memoir of Captain Sir Peter Parker, Bart.

SIR,

UNDERSTANDING that you are about to publish a Memoir of the naval career of the late Sir Peter Parker, allow me to express a hope, in justice to the memory of this humane and excellent officer, that you will notice a very unjust and every way unfounded report which had malevolently been spread in the navy, that the discipline of the Menelaus, while under his command, was unusually severe.

Sir, I stand here an evidence, with innumerable facts, to falsify a calumny so utterly destitute of even the shadow of a foundation. When I joined the Menelaus, I am free to admit I had imbibed some impression of this sort; but my surprise, and indeed astonishment, was early excited that such a report should ever have existed. Sir Peter was a man with a heart of a far different description. I gladly refer to Admiralty returns of quarterly punishments since I have been in this ship; from these it will appear, that no ship presents fewer instances; and I have never once seen a man in any way punished but according to the regular and public usage of the service; nor have I ever witnessed a more tender heart, or a breast where sympathy was more strong;—indeed, I may almost say, these feelings existed to an extreme in Sir Peter Parker. Many times have I seen them exerted greatly to his own inconvenience.—The feelings of affection and attachment his crew bore towards him have been most strikingly evinced; and until I saw it, I could scarcely think it possible that sentiments of such general affection could have so universally pervaded such a body of men. Whenever I have presented the report of crimes to him, the feelings and distress which this always brought with it was—“Crease, cannot we find some means to prevent punishment? Come; let us try what admonition will do.”—If it could be discovered that there was a shadow of hope of repentance, the culprit was always certain of escaping. And on those occasions

where imperious necessity, and justice to the better part of the crew, called forth examples to deter the offending in the repetition of crimes, Sir Peter for the day was most melancholy and low, scarcely ever leaving his cabin, or exchanging a sentiment with any person.

It is upwards of ten years since I was appointed a lieutenant by a commission from the commander in chief in India, from which period my duty has been always that of a first lieutenant, and during this long course of service I have never met with a kinder or more indulgent officer to all under his command.

Under these feelings allow me, Sir, to request that you will remove any erroneous impression which may have been malevolently excited of any severity having existed in his disposition; and I must further beg that you will be good enough to make use of the facts I have here stated, in any manner best calculated to give general publicity to the sentiments I am desirous of expressing.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

HENRY CREASE,

Senior Lieutenant of H.M.S. Menelaus.

FINIS.

